VOLUME XVIII NUMBER 1

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

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January-February, 1929

Law of Self-Preservation

Issued by

THE VEDANTA CENTRE
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Report

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Boston "Temple of the Universal Spirit," 32 The Fenway, will be dedicated by Swami Paramananda on Sunday, February 29, 1929. All friends of the work are cordially invited to be present. For further details see last page of this issue.

APOLOGY

The transfer of publication of the "Message" from California to Boston has delayed the issuing of the January number. To make up for this the January and February numbers have been combined. Further issues will appear as promptly as possible.

ASHRAMA ARTS AND CRAFTS DEPT.

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Message of the East

> "And, behold, the glory of the God of
> Israel came from the way of the East."
> —*Ezekiel.*
>
> "Light shall come again from the East."
> —*Tyndall.*

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PRAYER

By Swami Paramananda

O SUPREME Being, Father and Mother of us all,
My prayer this day is that I may love all,
And if, perchance, I am not able to love all,
Then grant me that those I do not love,
Thou mayest guard me against hating them.

My prayer this day—that my mind may not harbor
thoughts of resentment, harshness, and
bitterness against any living thing.

My prayer this day—that I may help all, through
Thy grace,
And those that I cannot help, that I may not hinder
with my thought, action, or utterance.

My prayer this day is that I may serve all with
humility of Spirit,
And that I may shun none.

My prayer this day—that I may not forget Thee
ever at any time.

O Supreme—All-seeing—All-understanding—my
unfailing Friend and Guide,
Thou alone canst make my heart free of its lacks
and shortcomings;

Thou alone canst make my mind free of blemished
thoughts, egotism, ignorance, and
world's pride.

My prayer this day—that through Thy holy grace
We may all become loving, winning, and peacemaking,
As becometh Thy true children.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Man's deepest exploration of his own nature gives again and again this threefold result that he feels that his real selfhood and real possibilities are not wholly exhausted by the terms "body" and "mind." He knows in his best moments another vivid aspect of his being, as strong as these, though often kept below the threshold of his consciousness: The Spirit which informs, yet is distinct from both his body and his mind.—*Evelyn Underhill.*

Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, He would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.
—*Shakespeare.*

The holy man puts his person behind and his person comes to the front. He surrenders his person and his person is preserved. Is it not because he seeks not his own? For that reason he can accomplish his own.—*Tao Teh King.*

The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns everything to its own nature, so that you cannot do him any harm; but as the royal armies sent against Napoleon, when he approached, cast down their colors and from enemies became friends, so disasters of all kinds, as sickness, offence, poverty, prove benefactors.—*Emerson.*

Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

—*Deuteronomy*

Give your desires to wealth and your aversions to poverty, and you will be disappointed in the one, you will fall into the other. Well, give them up to health, and you will be unfortunate; give them up to magistracies, honors, country, friends, children, in a word, to any of the things which are not in man's power, and you will be unfortunate. But give them up to *God,* surrender them to *Him,* let *Him* govern, let your desire and aversion be ranged on *His* side, and wherein will you be any longer unhappy? . . . Seek not the good in things external; seek it in yourselves; if you do not, you will not find it.—*Epictetus.*

To bestow alms and live righteously,
To give help to kindred,
Deeds which cannot be blamed,
This is the greatest blessing

. . . . .

On every side are invincible
They who do acts like these,
On every side they walk in safety,
And this is the greatest blessing.
—*From the Buddhist Beatitudes.*

When the heart begins to despair of human methods, and falls back again upon God, then God's help begins to work through human means.—*Jacob Boehme.*

Prayer for worldly goods is worse than fruitless, but prayer for strength of soul is that passion of the soul which catches the gift it seeks.—*George Meredith.*

LAW OF SELF-PRESERVATION

By Swami Paramananda

As we reflect on this theme of self-preservation, our mind naturally turns to some of the great outstanding utterances of Jesus the Christ: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake, shall find it." The man of the world does not take much stock in a saying of this kind. He is only interested in that which he calls practical. It is the point of view of the world's majority. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." Here are very definite forms of teaching, but how preposterous they must seem to the mind which takes everything in the light of market value. "He that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother for My name's sake, shall inherit everlasting life." Now we may have a desire to inherit everlasting life, but who of us will take the chance of giving up the things which apparently are ours for the sake of something indefinite, no matter what fascination it may hold for us? We want life eternal, we want to be saved, but we are not willing to pay the price. Often I have noted this, especially on lecture tours, speaking before large audiences. People are eager to get hold of something which will preserve their youth, give them health, or secure their beauty, and they think it is some sort of trick to be purchased for a few dollars. I merely give you the picture as I have observed it.

In every soul this desire is found in one form or another, but it can never be satisfied so long as we cling to the fleeting and the changing. You may turn away from this as Oriental negation, yet is it not a fundamental tenet of

Christian faith? "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." I am going to take this as the foundation for my theme. What does it mean, to lose our life for His sake? What can it mean? And is it practical for us to give up the thought of self when we have only a vague assurance that we shall find something in compensation? Let us view it from the angle of rationalism, for if it has any spiritual foundation, if it is true, then we should try to find its practical working hypothesis.

"Verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life." It is certain that we cannot think of two things at once. Man cannot concentrate on his own self-interest and at the same time hold his mind on the highest point of spiritual idealism. Such compromise does not work. The basic principle of all religions—not Christianity or Hinduism alone, but all great religions—is: First seek ye the kingdom of God and all other things shall be added unto you. This is a very definite promise, yet man in his haste, in his impatience, feels that he cannot afford to sacrifice that which is certain for something which seems to him vague and indefinite. As a result, he enjoys neither the one nor the other.

Tolstoy tells us: "The human soul enlightened by religion, no longer lives merely by the life of this world as irreligious people live, but lives by the eternal, infinite life, for which sufferings and death in this life are as insignificant as the corns on his hand and the fatigue of his limbs are insignificant to a laborer plowing a field." When we look up to the Infinite, when our mind and heart are fastened to the vast and unbounded, as the Vedic Upanishads call it, our physical troubles are minimized; they lose their bigness and significance. Sometimes they seem to vanish completely.

Man becomes transcendent; he is no longer afflicted by the external. At the present time they assume in our consciousness an importance out of all proportion to their reality, and in our great struggle to save ourselves we often do things which undermine our health and happiness, and which ultimately destroy our true sense of spiritual values.

"Man is a traveller going toward his own land. Let him not walk with downcast eyes, but let him keep them uplifted to the stars in order to know the right path to follow." Man is seeking; he is seeking happiness; he does not want to die; he does not want to lose anything, so he clings to this life; but clinging to it is not going to give him safety and security. Here is the great fallacy. There is no question that every one wants immortality—the quality of lasting happiness—but this we cannot secure by dwelling on the things which are fleeting. "Not by thinking of self does a man preserve himself," Lord Buddha taught his disciples. Only by losing his thirst for self does he find wisdom, peace—*Nirvana.*

If we want things that are abiding and everlasting we should detach our mind as much as possible from the fleeting—from the things that cause unhappiness and disorder. Here comes the real struggle. Though we may know these principles, how difficult it is for us to hold to them. Are we not constantly made aware that love heals and preserves? Every time we give ourselves through the channel—the avenue—of love, we find true self-expression; we are replenished; we are revived; yet how strangely our mind distorts our vision, causing us to dwell on things that are unlovely, ugly, sordid and detrimental. We have, however, the power of choice. Sometimes people say: "Oh, why does the Lord allow us to do this, or think thus?" He allows us everything. He has given us freedom to think—a mind to utilize for higher purposes. He has given us hands, feet, brain, everything, and these we can use in a constructive way; also we can bring in the element of destruction. You would not like it if you were interfered with every moment. Even children rebel against too much interference. Parents are obliged to give them a certain amount of freedom in order that they may learn the value of it. In same way, the Divine Providence gives us freedom and rejoices when we utilize it in such a manner as to bring about higher progress and a better order.

> "The drop wept for his severance from the sea,
> But the sea smiled, for 'I am all," said he;
> The Truth is all, nothing exists beside.
> That one point, circling, apes plurality."

How simple it is. How true it is. How profound and realistic at the same time. We understand the logic of it. A drop of water grieves; it doubts, because it is severed from the ocean, but the ocean reminds it, "I am all." There is no existence for the drop apart from the whole. So are we reminded every moment through physical phenomena, through the changing aspects of nature, through the things that perish before us, and the things which stand as eternal monuments, that there can be no existence separate from the whole—from the great ocean of being.

Whether a man's life be high or low; whether he is a great intellectual genius, or one who, perhaps, does not know how to read or write, makes no difference; it is all part of that great Infinitude, and when for the sake of That One we learn to abandon our attachments to the passing and the perishable, we shall partake of Its Infinite Nature. At first it may cost us pain, but there is blessing in pain when we know that through it we are going to be possessed of the Unbounded and Eternal. Herein lies the true strength of any religion or philosophy. The reality of this, however, cannot be ground in upon man's consciousness by dogma or creed; he himself has to open the book of life fresh and new, and with his own consciousness, with his own openness of spirit, read there that it is so. The Lord does not force any one to worship Him or love Him; it is out of our own volition that we do so, and in the doing find strength and fulfillment.

There is man's valuation, and God's valuation. Once some jewels were stolen from the Temple of Dakshineswar where Sri Ramakrishna, the great Hindu saint, used to worship as a priest. The proprietor of the temple was very much disturbed, and in his annoyance exclaimed: "Why does not the Mother of the Universe protect Her own treasure?" Sri Ramakrishna, who of course was a great mystic, smiled and said: "This may seem a very great treasure to you, but remember that the whole universe belongs to that Infinite."

We have formed the habit of thinking in parts, and herefrom come all our troubles, tragedies, and afflictions. We want everlasting life, and yet we limit our life. The Lord has not made boundary lines; but we have made boundary lines—we cut ourselves off. Therefore Christ said: "Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it." No more thinking of self—that is the best form of self-preservation. You may smile at this, and question my statement, but it can be put to the test. The best and safest moments of our life are those when we cease to concern ourselves about what is going to happen, how we should conduct ourselves, what we are going to eat and where it is going to come from. Yet how difficult it is for man even to picture such a life. It is not, however, difficult for me to picture it, because I have seen it moving before me, especially in India where not to think of the morrow is considered to be one of the greatest of spiritual disciplines. You have heard of Swami Vivekananda. Some of you knew him and admired him. Often in his wanderings, when he was on pilgrimage in the mountains away from people, he had to rely wholly on Divine protection. Several times he was at death's door, but he did not waver, and help came to him. It was a test for his spiritual life; not only for *his* life—everyone who is seeking God goes through these experiences.

God will provide. He may come in the form of a beggar; He may even come in the form of an animal and bring saving grace. Why not? He is all-pervading. These may sound like extravagant statements, but I do not think so. What is extravagant about it? Learning to see the Divine fact in everything, in every turn of life, cannot be extravagant. On the contrary, when we narrow our scope by self-limitation, our usefulness is very much impaired. Calculations will not save us—where we shall sleep, what we shall do, whether or not we shall take measure to save one who is perishing before us—otherwise selfish people would be the first to attain salvation. Men hoard great wealth; they detach themselves from the majority of human beings because they think that in this way they can preserve themselves and those who are immediately connected with them; but not in this way will they achieve self-preservation. I am not asking that you should be indifferent to the practical side, or should torment yourself in order to find this higher way of life. Not that; but that you should see the all-preserving quality in all forms of existence. This stupendous force we may bring even into material action; it will create in us a new consciousness. Element of fear will vanish. Where there is life, there is no death; where there is light, there is no darkness; where there is faith, there can be no element of doubt or despondency. These are fundamental principles.

To register your name as a Christian or a Buddhist or a Hindu is not enough—it means nothing. The point is, can you follow the call of Christ or Buddha or of the other master-spirits? To-day we are facing this basic fact—that it is not the superficial acceptance of any religion that brings the glowing spiritual effulgence; it is finding behind all these teachings the reality that we cannot deny. When face to face, you know your own immensity, your power—which is not your power, but God's power coming through you—you will no longer be afraid. That is what Christ means when He says: Those who have forsaken their life for My sake shall live, and those who are trying to save themselves, they shall lose their life.

It is not a question of pretending. One man may pretend to be very generous—many seek to gain the stamp of society in this way—but sooner or later we find him out. Another man may live the life; he may give a helping hand to those who are destitute, and yet no one will know that he has done anything. He has, however, preserved for himself the real element of existence. There is no deceit that can enter into true spiritual life. It is not a question of show. That is why Christ said: When ye pray, enter into your closet and shut the doors, and do not let anybody observe that you are praying. Pray in such quietness that only your Father may hear—not any one else. Herein lies our true strength. We shall have no lack of any kind if we only believe. If with all our heart, soul, body and mind—with our whole being—we can endorse a teaching of this kind and follow it in spite of all difficulties and materialistic thought, we shall improve this world. It may seem like an impossible thing to do, but we can do it. The only way, however, is by becoming an example. Nothing else counts. Who wants to hear your long-sounding philosophy, your great big words, or flowery speeches? Only one thing matters and that is the light we carry within. Suddenly in the darkness it falls upon another's path, and he is able to walk by its glow. He may have been full of doubt, but when he sees the light he believes. It reveals the way to him; it gives him strength, renewed hope, and courage.

Nothing shall be lacking. Do you really believe that, or do you take it merely as a beautiful saying? Bible tells us it is true, so it must be. First seek ye the kingdom of Heaven. If Christ had not followed this, He would not have been Christ. Always, in every step of His earthly existence, He sought first this great Principle—the kingdom of God. If we carry that Divine Principle in our thought, nothing can harm us. We must find a way to carry it all the time—in our waking and sleeping, in our work and play, and in our dealings with others. Our safety, our preservation —all—is contained in this. The trouble is, we forget; then we give excuses, but they do not help.

Many are professing what they call Christ-consciousness. Cosmic consciousness has become quite the fashion; books are being written on the subject by people who know very little about it. One who has experienced it, however, his whole being is revolutionized, and even though he may not utter a word, he gives birth to a force which is invincible. The drop and the ocean, that is a wonderful picture for us to carry in our mind. We, as finite human beings, bring in the element of self-limitation. We say we can only do so much; we cannot do this or that; we cannot afford to think of others. This is what cuts us off from the Source of life. We need prayer and clarity of thought more than we need food and drink. I am not advocating that we should go to an extreme in these things—there must be a sense of balance—but the flesh should not overshadow our spiritual interest. The question is, how are we going to find our relationship with our God-part? We shall not find it through thoughtlessness—that realization never comes to one who is not quickened by the Spirit. Therefore, the law of preservation is to think in the terms of That which saves, redeems, and preserves. As a man thinketh, so is he. If he thinks of love, he is restored; if he thinks on the holy, his body and mind are purified—nothing can touch him.

Through our mental attitude we can enlarge our life, or we can diminish it. We can even destroy ourselves through a twist in the mind, in a moment of uncontrolled emotion, passion or despondency. There is no anarchy in the universe. When such things come we have laid the foundation for them. There is a reason for everything. Merely knowing the technical part of religious teaching, the parables and sayings, will not save us; there must be a practical working out of these things in our life. We must live them, and we can. No matter how many times circumstances, our weakness, confusion of mind, long-standing habits may overthrow us, we must rise up again. Hundreds of times we may be knocked down, but let us remember what the mystic holds: that man is a pilgrim going toward his goal—the promised land. Let us take this thought home, walking, as I have said, with eyes uplifted. You know what happens when we walk looking down—we go past opportunities and afterwards regret it. Lying on our path are many opportunities to help ourselves, to save others; but when we are offended or angry, there is the brooding, downcast look, and we pass by unseeing. Let us always keep our mind and our eyes fixed above. If others maltreat us, if others provoke us, if they try to hinder or hurt us, that is no reason why we should lower our gaze. No matter how many times we may meet with discouragement, or sink down with despondency, let us bring ourselves back to the light, and look up. This is the way we preserve ourselves.

"Hatred is never conquered by hatred; it is conquered by love;" death is not conquered by the thought of death, by scheming and calculating; not that way. As we fix our mind on the everlasting Truth, deathless, diseaseless, and immortal, we become partakers of That. Thus man can save himself only when he is least concerned about himself. You may say, "If we become indifferent, who is going to preserve us, who is going to look after our interest?" One who never fails us. Consciously or unconsciously our friends may fail us, circumstances may fail us, everything may fail us; but there is One great, steadfast Principle—our Eternal Mother, our Eternal Father, all-compassionate, never provoked—Who does not take account of man's faltering quality; He remains ever the same. When, through fixity of purpose, we have learned to keep ourselves close to Him, then are we saved, then are we preserved. Not by dwelling on our anxieties and troubles and trying to remedy them by human means do we find the true way of self-preservation, but by bringing the Divine into our confidence, by making ourselves over to Him—our hands, our feet, our mind, our brain—by placing all in His safe-keeping. Then are we strong, then are we redeemed, and in our redemption the world is made happier. Under the influence of that great Power we are safe, and things which we call tragedies cannot befall us. It is not anything we can work out through mathematical calculation. Only through complete surrender do we find this shelter; it has its fruition in the human soul, in silence, in seclusion, in solitude. Let us, therefore, apply our spiritual teaching, for as we apply it we shall find our outer life will become very much more concentrated, more silent. We shall not spend our time in vain discussion—criticising, condemning—our gaze will be more focused, and as our unfoldment takes place our interest will be so great that we shall find no dullness. Many have the idea that spiritual life is dull. I remember when I was a youth, at the outset of my life as a wandering monk, I met a friend who held a high government position. When he saw me he was very much grieved, and asked me: "Don't you find it rather dull?" I smiled. The same man afterwards took up the spiritual life. He came to realize that there is no dullness in it, and you will realize it some day. We only think it dull because we have not contacted it. We have an idea that it must be very boresome forever to be good, and saying prayers. It is not, however, that you always do the same thing and utter the same words. There is an infinite and vast phenomenon that opens before us, with all its colorfulness, with all its beauty, with all its glory, and Christ knew this when He said: First seek ye the Kingdom of Righteousness and all other things will be added unto you. Life's fulfillment can never be found by gathering pebbles here and there, by collecting little fragments, but only by seeking That which is the sum and substance of all. As we touch that inexhaustible Reservoir of existence we find fullness here and forevermore.

Seek not the end of love in this act or in that act—lest indeed it become the end;
But seek this act and that act and thousands of acts whose end is love—
So shalt thou at last create that which thou now desirest;
And then when these are all past and gone, there shall remain to thee a great and immortal possession, which no man can take away.—*Edward Carpenter*

ART OF LOVE

By Francisco de Osuna

(A Spanish Franciscan monk of the 16th Century, who by his writings did much to popularize mystic theology in Spain.)

For once we have learned by faith that God is to be desired and loved, and is wholly love—then, if our affections be purged and prepared and exercised, I know not how we shall be hindered from being thus transformed, inflamed and raised to a state which knows all to be but one clod, one fragment, or (to speak better) one fount of love. . . . Likewise this manner of prayer is called the art of love, since only by love is it attained, and by it, more than by any other art or industry, is love multiplied, and also because Christ, the God of love, instructs in it those of a loving heart. Many a time they who cannot be conquered by force are conquered by art. . . . Wherefore this exercise is called an art by which those of little strength vanquish Him that is most strong, and bring Him captive to their hearts, binding Him with the chains and fetters of love, saying with the Bride: I hold Him and will not let Him go.

This art is called the art of love, which is said to be as strong as death, that conquers all. . . . Furthermore, it is called union, for when man after this way attains to God, he becomes one spirit with Him by an exchange of will, so that the man wills nought but that which God wills, neither does God withdraw Himself from the will of the man, but in all things they are one, like things that are perfectly united, which lose their own natures and are wholly transformed in a third. . . .

This exercise is also called profoundness, which thing contains darkness and depth; for it is based upon the deep and profound heart of man, which is dark indeed—that is, deprived of human understanding, so that the Spirit of God may come upon its darkness, and the waters of its desires, and say: "Let there be light.". . .

But why should I say more? This exercise is a refuge whereto we may betake ourselves when storms come near; . . . . a restitution which we make to God in rendering to Him all that of Himself is in us and keeping back nothing. It is a resurrection to spiritual life, wherein to the righteous man is given all power in Heaven over his soul, and on earth over his body; it is an attitude of reverence which we ever have toward God, being hushed in fear before Him; it is a tree from which virtues blossom like roses; it is the kingdom of God which we must gain by conquest and by art, since we have it within us, and every day also we pray for it; it is a royal priesthood, whereby, when we are masters of ourselves, we may offer ourselves to God; it is a deep hush made in the heaven of our souls, brief though it be and not lasting as the righteous man desires; it is a service which we do to God alone, adoring His Majesty only; it is a seat which we have made ready for Him that He may abide in the heart of our being; it is a tent which the traveler pitches in the desert; it is our most strong tower of refuge whence we may spy out heavenly things; a golden vessel wherein we lay up the manna in the ark of our inmost selves; it is a valley in which the richest wheat abounds; it is a victory which conquers the lesser world, subjecting it wholly to God; it is a vineyard to be tended with vigilance, and the shade that we greatly long for, where we taste of its fruit; it is the unction from the Holy One, which teaches all things; it is a garden enclosed on all sides, whose key is given to God alone, that He may enter whensoever He will.

The lock of error shuts the gate,
open it with the key of love.

—*Kabir*

SOME THOUGHTS

From the Journal of Leo Tolstoy

I have thought much about God, about the essence of my life, and it seemed I only doubted one and the other and believed in my own conclusions; and then, one time, not long ago, I simply had the desire to lean upon my faith in God and in the indestructibility of my soul, and to my astonishment I felt so firm and calm a confidence as I have never felt before. So that all my doubts and scrutinizings have evidently, not only not weakened my faith, but have strengthened it to an enormous degree. . . .

I have been thinking especially clearly of that which I have already said many times: that all the evil in the world comes only from this, that people look upon themselves, upon their own personality, as a worthy object of their conscious life—upon themselves or upon a group of personalities, it is all the same. As long as a man lives for himself unconsciously, he does no harm. If there is a struggle, then the struggle is an unconscious one which is ended at once when the struggle with surroundings is ended; man adjusts himself to it or he goes under, and this struggle is neither cruel nor is it an evil one. The struggle begins to be cruel only when man directs his consciousness upon it, prepares it, strengthens and multiplies its energy tenfold and hundredfold.

As Pascal says: there are three kinds of people; one kind know nothing and sit quietly, and just as quiet are those who know; but there are a middle kind who don't know but believe they do; from them comes all the evil in the world. They are the people in whom consciousness has awakened, but they don't know how to use it.

The whole thing lies in this—that you should always remember who you are. There is no situation so difficult, from which the way out would not immediately offer itself, if you only would remember that you are not a temporary, material manifestation, but an eternal omnipresent being. "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die, and though he were dead yet shall he live. Believest thou this?" I walked on the street. A wretched beggar approached me. I forgot who I was and passed by. And then suddenly I remembered, and just as naturally as the hungry begin to eat and the tired sit down, I turned back and handed him something. It is the same with the temptation to quarrel, to insult, to be vain.

The essence of the teachings of Christ consists in this, that man ought to know who he is; that he should understand, like a bird which does not use its wings and runs on the land, that he is not a mortal animal, dependent on the conditions of the world, but like a bird which has understood that it has wings and has faith in them, he should understand that he himself was never born and never died and always is, and passes through this world in one of the innumerable forms of life to fulfill the will of Him who sent him into this life. . . .

Receive with thankfulness the enjoyments of the flesh—all that you meet on the way, if they are not sinful—in short, if they do not go against your consciousness, if they do not make it suffer. But use the efforts of your will, your liberty, only to serve God. . . . Man is a tool of God. At first I thought that it was a tool with which man himself was called to work; now I have understood that it is not man who works, but God. The business of man is only to keep himself in order. . . .

Something very important. I lay and was almost asleep, suddenly something seemed to tear in my heart. It occurred to me: that is the way death comes from heart failure; and I remained calm—I felt neither grief nor joy, but blessedly calm—whether here or there, I know that it is well with me, that things are as they ought to be, just like a child tossed in the arms of its mother, does not stop smiling from joy for it knows that it is in her loving arms. And the thought came to me; why is it so now and was not so before? Because before, I did not live the whole of life, but lived only an earthly life. In order to believe in immortality, one must live an immortal life here. One can walk with one's feet and not see the precipice before one, over which it is impossible to cross, and one can rise on one's wings. . . .

Just now, remaining alone after my work, I asked myself what I should do, and having no personal desire (except the bodily demands arising only when I want to eat and sleep) I felt so keenly the joy of the Knowledge of the Will of God, that I need and want nothing but to do what He wants. This feeling arose as a result of the question which I myself put to myself when I remained alone in the silence: Who am I? Why am I? And the answer came so clearly by itself: No matter who and what I am, I have been sent by some one to do something. Well, let me do that work. And so joyously and so well did I feel my fusion with the Will of God.

This is my second live feeling for God. Then I simply felt love for God. At this moment I cannot remember how it was; I only remember that it was a joyful feeling. Oh, what happiness is solitude! To-day it is so good: you feel God.

I have said to thee full oft, and yet I say again: Forsake thyself, resign of thyself, and thou shalt enjoy great peace. Give all for all, seek nothing, ask nothing again; stand purely and undoubtingly in me and thou shalt have me.

—*Thomas A. Kempis*

PATH OF GOD

By Gayatri Devi

"Seekest thou liberation, O my soul?
Seekest thou Supreme Knowledge, Supreme Wisdom,
Supreme Bliss?
Then mayest thou enter the Path.
Fearest thou toil and hardship therein?
Nay, fear not, for Love is the Guide and Life
the Goal . . ."

These lines I have given, because they almost express my theme. "Path of God"—it is a very big subject to talk about; so many things can be said concerning it, so many great personages have been born in this world who have found their way to Reality, and have shown us definite ways to go, definite paths to follow in order to reach It. On the surface those ways, those paths, seem different, but they are all born of one motive and lead to the same goal. We, with our narrowness of mind, quarrel; we say, "My path is the only path, my way is the only way," but if we knew how to see deep down, we would find that there is only one Path, one eternal Path, leading the soul to God. If we can grasp this, if we can comprehend it, not theoretically, but really—taking it in with understanding, tolerant spirit—then I do not think there can be any more quarrel between different sects and religions.

What is the Path of God? To me it is not anything that man has created through his own calculation, has blocked out by his own limitations, or surrounded by his pettiness and narrowness. It is an invisible path, running through man's inner life. Nobody can see it; but it is there. It is a channel by means of which man reaches out for his Ideal—a path of inner living, inner striving. It does not mean merely following a religion in a superficial way, or going to a church, or taking up some form of creed. God is not just a God of tradition. One who can really put into practice the fundamental qualities pertaining to Godhead—those divine qualities—making them true and real in his life, that one is treading on the Path of God. And what are those qualities? They are love—love, not as we know it, at every step asking for some return, seeking some gain—but the love —the divine love—that burns up man's iniquities, destroys all his imperfections, and consumes his whole life, leaving the soul alone in its search for the Beloved; they are wisdom, understanding, righteousness, truth, peace, poise. These are the qualities one has to attain in following the Path of God. They may seem abstract to us. We may feel that we cannot enter into these things all of a sudden. We cannot. We have indulged in a different life altogether. We have been absorbed by the world, therefore if we now desire to live a life of God, a spiritual life, we shall have to strive for it, struggle for it; many things we shall have to overcome. Again and again we may fall down, we may stumble, we may make mistakes, but if we hold our Ideal before our eyes, we shall not be discouraged, we shall not give up. A child, before it learns to walk, falls down many times, but always it gets right up and tries again. We can do the same thing. No matter how often we fail and falter, or move away from the right path, we should not abandon our efforts, we should strive and be full of hope. It may seem difficult. It is difficult; but what is not difficult in this life? Everything worth while that a man wants to attain is difficult. Man has to work for it, give his time, his life, everything.

From the ordinary point of view, the man of the world who desires to have earthly treasure—the gems and jewels which the earth holds in her bosom—cannot have them unless he struggles to attain them. Same way we cannot have that brightest gem in our life, the jewel which is our birthright, our treasure, unless we mine for it, work for it, strive for it. We have nothing to fear. Our path at times may seem very difficult, our struggles very, very great, but we should never sit down and say we cannot go on. That is the ordinary way of doing. We have big ideals. We do not have to make a new path for ourselves; we have great lives as our model. We are going to tread the path that Christ went on, that the Buddha walked, that all inspired souls have followed. Their lives are like shining lights, glowing before our eyes, shedding a radiance on our path, by which we can see, even amidst the darkness. Why do we not remember them—what they went through—those great personages? Think of Buddha, twelve years he had to meditate to attain his illumination, and we can imagine what Christ did during his years of preparation. These things are to teach us.

How can *we* strive, what do *we* have to do, we may ask, to follow their path? We have to live a life like theirs. Spiritual living—that is the secret. What made Christ so great; what made Buddha, Buddha; why is it the whole world worships them? It is not that they were preachers and talked big things; it is because they were the embodiment of the Ideal; they became what they preached; they were the thing itself. It is for us to know that secret and follow that path. There is nothing mysterious or mystifying about it. It is the simple path—the path of love, the path of faith, the path of humility, the path of self-surrender, the path of losing oneself in a greater reality—leaving nothing for oneself, no self-will, no desire, no longing—just one aim, one idea. We cannot achieve this, however, so long as we are absorbed by outer things. If we desire a greater expansion of life, we shall have to open our spiritual eye; we shall have to wake up, tear our veil of ignorance and see through the darkness.

Why not live thoughtfully? Why not live with a little reflection? Think how we go through life without knowing the purpose of our existence. Why are we here? Do we ever ask ourselves this? Do we ever want to find out? Man has no end of curiosity. He is constantly asking questions, constantly trying to penetrate all the mysteries of the universe; but when it concerns himself, he is silent. Why does he not seek to discover why he is here? Is it to live, as Emerson says, like an eating, drinking, sleeping man, with death as the end? That cannot be the way. Has not this question any answer? It has. The answer is given by all great souls. We are born into this world not just to eat, drink, and be merry, but to know That from which we have come, to find out that One Reality which is the Cause of our being—to realize It—to make It real and living in our life. That is the aim, that is the purpose of all human existence.

How beautifully, how definitely sounds the voice of the ancient sages of India: "Hear ye all, children of immortal bliss!" We look at each other. Are we the children of bliss? Are we immortal? We thought that we were mortals afflicted by disease and death. We are not; we are children of immortality, children of God, ever untouched by sin and sorrow. So long as we do not know this, however; so long as we think that we are mortal, we must suffer the afflictions of mortality. We must know it; we must realize it. But how? It cannot be through theoretical knowledge. Merely to say that God exists, from Him we come, and then forget it, does no good. With most of us our spiritual interest is very superficial. We think that if we go to church once a week and hear a minister, or sometimes read from the holy Scriptures, we are doing a great deal—are very advanced; but our God is a God of mental concept, a God of philosophy, cut and dried. We should make Him God of our heart, God of our soul. He should be the living element in our daily life. We must make room for Him in our thoughts and feelings. That is real spiritual living. We must cry unto Him every day: "I take shelter with Thee; help me, lead me, give me love, give me devotion, make me thine own." There is nothing else to ask for.

The secret of living is giving—giving oneself, giving the highest, giving entirely to a higher Ideal. Often we think that spiritual life is going to deprive us of all our pleasure and happiness; that it is something cut and dried, with no beauty or fragrance. People have an idea that it is just a measured thing, surrounded by rules and regulations. That is not the life that leads one to God. God-life is a spontaneous life, a genuine, a natural life, constantly unfolding its inner qualities, giving of its secrets. As a flower opens under the rays of the sun, bestowing its beauty, its fragrance on all, the same way, when our life is brought under the direct rays of the Great Sun, the Great Truth, the Great God, we unfold—we show our inner being. In every one of us there is infinite storehouse of fragrance, beauty, sweetness, mellowness, and tenderness. Why then do we shut our doors? Why do we keep ourselves imprisoned? Let us open ourselves to the rays of that sun, that He may mould us, unfold us, make us beautiful in the truest sense. Life will be so wonderful; it will not only glorify us, but through us be a blessing to others. In order, however, to give ourselves openly to God, we have to be free—free from bondage, mental and physical, from worldly ties and material surroundings. This means, first of all, eliminating that little self of ours, which is constantly trying to lead us astray, bringing in a sense of I and mine, producing in us self-will, egotism and pride. These have to go; they have to be lost in a higher Self, a greater Reality.

As Christ said, man must be born again. Not physically, but into a new world, a world of Truth, a world of God, where dwell eternal peace, abiding happiness—a world where nothing changes. It is this that Christ called the kingdom of Heaven, and it is not outside, it is in our own soul. We must learn how to enter it. Unless we know how to enter the inner sanctuary of our being, we can never have any peace, any real happiness, any poise, or rest, because in the outer world there is nothing abiding. We are all looking for peace, looking for happiness, running after this and that—but we come back again and again empty-handed. Our senses may be gratified for a while, but it never lasts; there is reaction. The only happiness, the only peace which endures, comes when a soul knows how to connect itself with the Cause of its being. We must learn not to depend so much on the outer world; but to go more within—within our soul where dwells the Great Effulgent Being we call God, which is our Higher Self — and there place ourselves in His Hands, and let Him lead us on our way. He is the abode of all blessedness.

It is very nice to talk about these things; but they are mere words when they are not put into practice. We must make them living. You may say: You are not giving anything new, you are not saying anything we have not heard before. No, I am not saying anything new, or that you do not know. You have heard it over and over again. In spiritual world there is nothing new; but there is something which is eternal, ever fresh, which never grows old. The sun rises each morning and gives us his light and warmth; but we do not get tired of him; we do not say: "Why does he come out every day?" On the contrary, if he stays under the clouds we feel suffocated. We cannot stand it. The breeze blows and we breathe in the air. We do not say: "Why does not the air stop blowing? We do not want it," because we cannot do without it, we cannot live without it. Same way with our spiritual life: we cannot live without it; we cannot do without it. Sometimes we do live forgetting it; but that is not real living.

We have been so long in darkness that we think we have to remain that way forever. We must break the walls of our cellar. We must come out into the open air and free life—life of Spirit, life of God, life of Truth. Let us wake up each morning with new impetus, new birth. Every day is fresh, every day is beautiful, and comes to supply us with His strength, His blessings, His grace. It is for us to learn how to take these. We must open our eyes, and see; we must live worthily, as real children of God. Nobody can force us to do this; we ourselves must have the aspiration. It is not by listening to somebody that we can achieve it; it must come from our own inner being; it must come as a desire. When in spite of all the world's pleasures and gains our heart and soul seem starved—empty—when nothing can fill them, then do we begin to search for it, because that which is immortal and eternal in us can never be satisfied with that which is changing and fluctuating. It is this desire for expansion, for greater life, that leads us on, that shows us the way. We must not fool ourselves, however; we must know what we want. Some people take up the spiritual life for the sake of ambition. They would like to be a Christ or a Buddha, because they think that that way they would have great power. We should not want power. What are we going to do with it? Let that not be our aim. God should not be sought for any personal advantage. We should seek Him because we cannot do without Him. Without Him our life is empty, is in vain. Let not any ambition or desire for gain prompt our destiny. Ambition does not make a man great. Vanity, arrogance, and pride, these do not constitute greatness. Think of Christ—where lay His power? In his lowliness, in His humility. He did not try to make men worship Him. He only wanted to glorify His Father in every word, in every action. "Not I, but Thou, my Father!"—that was His motto. We should get the spirit of these things. We must learn how to be humble. Humility is the stepping-stone to all spiritual living. It does not mean that we have to depreciate ourselves and be nobody and say we are nothing; it means we must feel that without the support of that Life, our life is nothing. Without the background of God, man is very insignificant. We must surrender to Him and fill ourselves with His power.

The other day I had an experience which I want to share with you. Sitting in the *patio* suddenly my eyes fell upon the grass, and I saw something sparkling. It seemed like a diamond, but as I looked I saw it was a little dewdrop. It was glowing with the sunshine; it looked like a star, and I could not help but compare it with my life personally and with every life. If we could only feel, each one of us, that we are like the dewdrop! No matter how insignificant it may be, the world needs it; it brings blessing to the grass, it moistens the earth. If in the same way we could live our life very humbly, very simply—not looking for gain, name, care or attention, but silently surrendering all to Him—still, pure crystal, really sanctified like that dewdrop which was shining in the morning sun; if we could be like that, what blessings would we not know! We cannot all be big rivers; we cannot all be great streams; but we can be like dewdrops. When we become crystal and pure, the sun will shine on us, and our insignificant life will become full of glow, full of radiance.

There is no necessity to be great. We can be His. That is all we need in our life; nothing more, nothing less. Let us think of these things—take in their significance. It is not by hearing a lot of words that we are benefited. The question is, how much of what we hear enters our soul, quickens our inner nature? Let us try to hold our Ideal before our eyes, and with silent steps approach it. It may now seem unapproachable; yet, as we strive, as we give ourselves to it, there will come a time when we shall be one with our Ideal; our whole life will blend with the great Reality.

WISE SAYINGS OF CONFUCIUS

Duke Ling of Wei was consulting Confucius about army arrangements. His answer was, "Had you asked me about such things as temple requisites, I have learned that business, but I have not yet studied military matters." And he followed up this reply by leaving on the following day.

After this, during his residence in the State of Ch'in, his followers, owing to a stoppage of food supply, became so weak and ill that not one of them could stand. Tsz-lu, with indignation pictured on his countenance, exclaimed, "And is a gentleman to suffer starvation?"

"A gentleman," replied the Master, "will endure it unmoved, but a common person breaks out into excesses under it."

Addressing Tsz-kung, the Master said, "You regard me as one who studies and stores up in his mind a multiplicity of things—do you not?" "I do," he replied; "Is it not so?" "Not at all. I have one idea—one cord on which to string all."

To Tsz-lu he remarked, "They who know virtue are rare."

The Master said: Observe a man's actions; scrutinize his motives; take note of the things that give him pleasure. How then can he hide from you what he really is?

Absorption in the study of the supernatural is most harmful.

You, shall I tell you what true knowledge is? When you know, to know that you know, and when you do not know, to know that you do not know—that is true knowledge.

The Master said: I do not see how a man without sincerity can be good for anything. How can a cart or carriage be made to go without yoke or crossbar?

Wang-sun Chia asked, saying: What means the adage, "Better be civil to the kitchen-god than to the god of the inner sanctum?" The Master replied: The adage is false. He who sins against Heaven can rely on the intercession of none.

The Master said: How am I to regard one who has rank without liberality, who performs ceremonies without reverence, who approaches the rites of mourning without sorrow?

Having heard the True Way in the morning, what matters if one should come to die at night?

Instead of being concerned that you have no office, be concerned to think how you may fit yourself for office. Instead of being concerned that you are not known, seek to be worthy of being known.

"With a meal of coarse rice," said the Master, "and with water to drink, and my bent arm for my pillow—even thus I find happiness. Riches and honours without righteousness are to me as fleeting clouds."

When you see a good man, think of emulating him; when you see a bad man, examine your own heart.

The Duke of Shih questioned Tsz-lu about Confucius, and the latter did not answer. Hearing of this, the Master said, "Why did you not say he is a man with a mind so intent on his pursuits that he forgets his food, and finds such pleasure in them that he forgets his troubles, and does not know that old age is coming upon him."

Words of just admonition cannot fail to command a ready assent. But practical reformation is the thing that really matters. Words of kindly advice cannot fail to please the listener. But subsequent meditation on them is the thing that really matters. I cannot make anything of the man who is pleased with advice, but will not meditate on it, who assents to admonition but does not reform.

He who requires much from himself and little from others will be secure from hatred.

Hopeless indeed is the case of those who can herd together all day long without once letting their conversation reach a higher plane, but are content to bandy smart and shallow wit.

The ancients hesitated to give their thoughts utterance; they were afraid that their actions might not be equal to their words.

When a man is generally detested, or when he is generally beloved, closer examination is necessary.

The real fault is to have faults and not try to amend them.

Men's natures are alike; it is their habits that carry them far apart.

The Master said: Would that I could do without speaking! Tzu Kung said: If our Master never spoke, how could we, his disciples, transmit his doctrines? The Master replied: Does God speak? The four seasons hold on their course, and all things continue to live and grow. Yet, tell me, does God speak?

SANCTUARY

By Mildred Phillips

I have a place apart,
  A hidden room,
Where lights burn soft and clear,
And flowers bloom.

It is a place of peace,
  A place of prayer,
And love and joy abide
  Forever there.

For one dear Guest the lights,
  The flowers' perfume;
He only stays within
  My hidden room.

EMERSON'S DEBT TO THE ORIENT*

By Prof. Arthur E. Christy of New York University

For decades Americans have spoken of Emerson as a Boston Brahmin without much thought of the peculiar nicety with which the appellation fits. Some have vague ideas of a general analogy between transcendentalism and Hinduism, but the extent to which the former was dependent upon the latter for inspiration, imagery and doctrine has rarely been studied even by scholars.

It is generally accepted that transcendentalism was compounded of English idealism, German intuitionalism, and Oriental immanence. It is also accepted that the various Platonic schools of thought held a potent influence on Emerson. And much has been written in the past on all phases of Emerson's mind, save his acceptance of the doctrine of Oriental immanence. There, is the greatest dearth of information. The story of what a strong man indubitably

*The "Vedanta Kesari." Reprinted in an abridged form from "The Monist."

sincere and a genius, did with the ancient thought of Asia is one of the most fascinating narratives of the human mind and literary history.

At what age and by what means was Emerson first drawn into contact with the philosophies of Asia? What did he think of them? What did he read? How was his interest nourished? And finally what did Emerson accept of the declarations of the Upanishadic seers regarding life and religion? The following is an attempt to answer these questions.

II.

Emerson very probably came to associate the sacred writers of the East with those of the Platonic schools through his adoption of the critical attitude of the French philosopher, Cousin, whose works he read. Cousin had written: "The roots of Greece and Rome are absolutely Oriental. Language, writing, the alphabet, processes of industry and agriculture, mechanical arts, primitive forms of government, the primitive processes and characters of art, and the primitive forms of religion, all, all are Oriental. . . . When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East, especially those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discern there so many truths, and truths so profound, and standing in so strong a contrast with those mean results which in these latter days, have satisfied European genius, that we are tempted to bow the knee before the genius of the East, and see in that cradle of mankind the true home of philosophy!"

It was the concept of unity that appealed to Emerson in Orientalism. Early in life he had written in his Journals, "An obscure and slender thread of truths runs through all mythologies, and this might lead to the highest regions of philosophy."

To Emerson, the Vedas and the Koran were scriptures just as sacred as the Hebrew Bible. His was not the dogmatist's pose of infallibility. And one could go on, culling out passage after passage, some of which speak of Occidental natural science in terms of Hinduism. "All science is transcendental or else passes away. Botany is now acquiring the right theory—the avatars of *Brahma* will presently be the textbooks of natural history." Nature is the same in India as in America, the basis of universal life. God is all, and in all, and eternal. All that is not of the infinite source is ephemeral and will vanish. This was Emerson's faith. Let it be repeated, he was eclectic in sympathy and his philosophy was composed largely of Oriental doctrines.

Before turning from the spirit with which Emerson approached the Eastern writings, one final passage which summarizes his bias better than any other should be presented here. "Yes, the Zoroastrian, the Indian, the Persian Scriptures are majestic, and more to our daily purpose than this year's almanac or this day's newspaper. . . . I owed—my friend and I owed—a magnificent day to the Bhagavad Gita. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and another climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us. Let us now go back and supply minute criticism to it, but cherish the venerable oracle."

III.

No very certain proof has ever been given of the time when Emerson first came under the influence of Orientalism. In a letter, Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson wrote: "I think that I remember dimly that even while in college his letters show that he had at least read extracts from them [the East

Indian Scriptures], probably in some Englishman's account of India." In the Journal of 1845 he writes, " The East is grand and makes Europe appear the land of trifles." But five years previous to this, in the summer of 1840, he had written in a letter to a friend: "In the sleep of the great heats there is nothing for me but to read the Vedas, the Bible of the tropics, which I find I come back upon every three or four years. It is sublime as heat, and night, and breathless ocean." When this passage was entered upon the pages of his notebooks, Emerson was twenty-seven years of age. It may never be possible to determine entirely just what books he read during his college years, but there is every evidence that his curiosity was alive and his knowledge of India and her faiths profound.

The first positive knowledge that we have of Emerson's reading translations of Indian works themselves comes from the Journal of 1822, when Emerson was nineteen years of age. He concluded several pages of remarks on God, which expressed a rather youthful monistic faith, not yet full-blown but clearly indicating the course of his mind, by saying, "I know nothing more fit to conclude the remarks which have been made in the last pages than certain fine pagan strains.

> ". . . of dew-bespangled leaves and blossoms bright,
> Hence! vanish from my sight,
> Delusive pictures, unsubstantial shows,
> My soul absorbed, one only Being knows,
> Of all perceptions, one abundant source,
> Hence every object, every moment flows,
> Suns hence derive their force,
> Hence planets learn their course;
> But suns and fading worlds I view no more,
> God only I perceive, God only I adore!"

Emerson's Brahminism was nourished by the sacred books of the East. The parallels in transcendentalism and Hinduism were not accidental.

IV.

The literary use which Emerson made of this wide reading is fascinating. The two poems *Brahma* and *Hamatreya,* are generally and rightly considered to be the crystallization of the Oriental forces in his thinking. *Brahma* appeared in the first number of the *Atlantic Monthly* in November, 1857, and read as follows:

"If the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass and turn again.
Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same,
The vanished gods not less appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.
They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.
The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the Sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven."

We cannot here enter an extended exposition of the poem *Hamatreya* which is next in importance, in showing Emerson's indebtedness to Hindu works. Several lines in the poem *Celestial Love,* afford in their symbolism close analogy, if not proof, that they were based on Vedic writings.

"In a region where the wheel
On which all beings ride
Visibly revolves;
Where the starred eternal worm
Girds the world with bound and term;
Where unlike things are alike;
Where good and ill
And joy and moan,
Melt into one."

V.

It is exceedingly difficult to determine whether Emerson actually believed in the doctrine of transmigration as literally as the Hindus. If he did not accept the doctrine literally and in toto, at least he always considered it worthy of mention.

It is in Emerson's doctrine of the "Over-Soul" that the closest philosophical affinity may be found with the Hindu Vedanta. Numerous men have already pointed out that the word itself is a literal translation of a synonymous Sanskrit term. Emerson regarded matter as the negative manifestation of the Universal Spirit. It has its life and development through the direct immanence of the Absolute. And, in like manner, Mind is an expression of the Universal Spirit in its positive power. Man himself is nothing but the Universal Spirit present in a material organism. Man is of the Divine, lives in the Divine, and in every power he manifests he shows the Divine life within. The soul is not a separate individuality but "part and parcel of God." In reality, Emerson says, "The soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being in which they lie—an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within and from behind, a light shines through us upon things, and makes us aware that we are nothing, that the light is all."

The Indian Vedanta repudiates the conception of the creation which implies, first, a creation out of nothing, and secondly, the separation of the Creator from His creation, and which, finally, in this implication, leaves unexplained the organic growth and development of the Universe. The Vedanta maintains that nature is not created but begotten with the elements of life and growth inherent in it, no external impulse being necessary for its development. The whole cosmos is a living organism—one life pervading all and connecting all, from the highest to the lowest order of beings, in such defined relations to each other as to show intelligence and purpose. The Bhagavad Gita expresses it in saying that all are "threaded on the Lord, as jewels on a string."

In Emerson's essay of that title it is in the Over-Soul that "every man's particular being is contained and made one with all others—and man is the facade of this temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide." And again, "We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meanwhile within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty to which every part and particle is equally related; the Eternal One. And this deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. We see the world, piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul."

Whole passages from the *Over-Soul* might be supplanted by passages from the Upanishads and their relevancy be unaffected. Take the following from the *Chandogya Upanishad* and note its resemblance to the concluding passage above. "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the Infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else, that is the finite. The Infinite is immortal, the finite is mortal."

The soul within man is God and cannot err. Indeed, "man stands at the point betwixt the inward spirit and outer matter. He sees that one explains and translates the other: that the world is the mirror of the soul. He is the priest and interpreter of Nature thereby."

An inquirer might well ask, then, of the source of this outward matter, and we have the answer in the poem *Woodnotes* where Emerson says,

"Ever fresh the broad creation,
A divine improvisation,
From the heart of God proceeds,
A single will, a million deeds.
Once slept the world, an egg of stone,
And pulse, and sound, and light was none;
And God said, throb, and there was motion,
And the vast mass became vast ocean."

Emerson's use of the Hindu metaphor in the line "Once slept the world, an egg of stone" again shows how he borrowed from the Vedas. For in the *Chandogya Upanishad* we read, "In the beginning this world was merely non-being. It was existent. It developed. It turned into an egg. It lay for the period of a year. It was split asunder. One of the two eggshell parts became silver, one gold. That which was of silver is this earth. That which was of gold is the sky. What was the outer membrane is the mountains. What was the inner membrane is cloud and mist. What were the veins are the rivers. What was the fluid within is the ocean."

VI.

Emerson was an evolutionist—to the extent that one of his critics has raised the question of how he could be an evolutionist and at the same time a mystic. Briefly, Emerson's concept of evolution must be thought of in terms of emanation. This is highly suggestive of the modern theory of evolution. It implies that *Brahma,* through the laws of Its own being, throws Itself into manifestation of Itself. The Hindus illustrate this idea by the similes of a spider and its web, the hair and nails growing on an animate body, the sea and its waves and foam, the sun and its rays playing on the rippling water. But in doing so the Hindu does not predicate that what is thus let out is separated from *Brahma,* which is designated its cause. He recognizes an identity of existence in the effect and its cause, the subject and the object. The effect is always latent in the cause; the cause is identical with effect. Now let Emerson speak. "The world seems very simple and easily dispatched. . . . There are but two things, or but one thing and its shadow . . . Cause and Effect, and Effect is itself worthless if separated from Cause. It is Cause still that must be worshipped in Effect, so that it is only one thing. The worship of Effect is Idolatry."

In summary, what the Hindus and Emerson obviously repudiated was the conception of creation, which implied, first, a creation out of nothing, and secondly, the separation of the Creator from His creation, and which thirdly, in this implication, left unexplained the organic growth and development of the universe.

Finally, Emerson wrote, "I am primarily engaged to myself to be a public servant to all the gods, to demonstrate to all men that there is intelligence and good will at the heart of things, and higher and higher leadings." Surely, then, the sage of Concord, Massachusetts, who was the public servant to the gods of the Vedas and the Hindus *was* a Brahmin. And the world has seen a man in whom the East met the West in a happy synthesis.

If chosen souls could never be alone
    In deep mid-silence, open-doored to God,
No greatness ever had been dreamed or done.

—*Lowell*

A NEW YEAR BENEDICTION

Report of Service conducted by
Swami Paramananda

Whether birthdays and anniversaries owe their significance to cyclic law or merely to human psychology is a question which vexes not at all this mad world as, on New Year's Eve, it madly celebrates its own passing hour. But even on this night, when all restraint seems cast aside, there are quiet spots where prayerful hearts meet in "right remembrance." And such was the Chapel of the Vedanta Centre one half hour before midnight, on December 31st, 1928, when for the first time in the history of the work, a special Service was held to mark the coming of a new year.

The Christmas flowers still bloomed amid the candles on the altar; the red and white vigil lights still threw their reflection on hemlock and pine, as very simply the Swami led the group that had gathered to hear him, into a still world of peace—a hallowed world of love that is eternal.

There was music; a sacred chant gave of its message. The flowers spoke, the lights spoke, and above all, the silence spoke to those listening hearts as the Swami touched that deeper Truth which only beauty, light, silence can express. He said:

As we stand on the threshold, ready to enter what we call a New Year, let us pray; and let our prayers be from the depth—from the innermost depth—of our being, that they may be vital enough to lead us to that One—the Holy One.

O Thou Infinite, All-loving, All-seeing Spirit of the
Universe—Mother and Father of us all—
Do Thou bestow upon us Thy protecting love.
May we, through Thy grace, hear with our ears that
which is holy—that which is of good import;

May we behold with our eyes that which is pure, spiritual and sublime;
May all our thoughts, all our words, all our actions be consecrated to Him from whom we have descended.
Peace—peace—peace be unto us, and to all living beings.

A New Year! It may easily be called a new era, a new chapter, a new phase of our unfoldment. We are about to take a step forward, and in order that it may be well taken, in order that this new era, this new phase, may have the freshness, the spirit of safety and security we wish for it, we must begin it wisely. It is like the obverse and reverse of a coin: where we end, we begin. If we look for the end to be well, the beginning must be well also.

What they have just sung: "Thou art the Goal of my existence—the Source of all my strength," I think it never rang so potently in my ears as now, while we sat here in this silent room with the little candles. "Thou art the Goal of my existence!" It came upon me with the same fervor and strength as Christ's words: "Love thy Lord with all thy strength, with all thy heart, with all thy mind." Anything that takes us away from that is not of good import. We may in our moment of weakness think otherwise; we may turn from the little candle lights on the altar to the glaring, artificial lights of our modern civilization, as we call it; but it is the candle light—the vigil lamp—which eternally holds before us the goal of our existence, and in its glow we see the face of Infinite Truth. Therefore let us, with heart of meditation, pray as strongly, as deeply, as we are capable of, that we may aspire toward a better life, that we may arouse within ourselves a more heroic determination; for determination is half the winning. If there is a battle in life, determination helps us to conquer. Let us together enter a new era of prayer, of devotion, of spiritual thought, learning to fasten our hearts to the Truth—the Abiding—in order that we may not be carried away by the momentary—by those things which rise like bubbles and in a moment are gone.

I have been wondering what I could give you to-night as a symbolic something to carry away with you, and these lines come to me:

"Children of Light, walk in the light;
Let all darkness vanish from your path!"

As I repeat them a picture rises before my mind, of a temple in India with priests, and illumination, and of a band of devotees carrying candles and torches before them. It is a holy picture, revealing that if a man carries the light of Truth, there is no danger to him through darkness, for the light naturally counteracts all difficulties and dangers. We who cry out with anxious thought, we who are afraid—who doubt ourselves, the world, and our capacity to cope with the world—where can we find the remedy? In the Light. As we learn to carry the Light, all these doubts and fears will vanish. In every religion we find without exception that the most perfect symbol is the symbol of light. Truth is often shown symbolically as one form or another of light. Men sometimes worship it as fire. Why not? What is more wonderful than fire—consuming everything that is impure without itself being contaminated? There is no amount of darkness that can enshroud the light. Therefore what can we carry with us so potent as the light of Truth—the torch of Faith—and the armor of Love? Marvelous equipment! A torch, no matter how complete it may be, must have light. The armor of love, without being an encumbrance, always protects us. The selfish, arrogant, self-seeking, ignorant world may beat against it, but it ever remains intact. Is it not better to enter the New Year, to take the new step, by equipping oneself in this way, than by filling the mind with noise, artificial distractions, and what we may call empty vanity?

In India there is a beautiful concept—and not only in India; it is held by all mystic souls—"The knower of God, of Truth, is ever peaceful and ever fearless." I remember as a little boy I used to quote this verse. It was a very deep thought with me even from my early days. I felt its magnitude. The one who knows the Truth lives close to the heart of God, and is ever fearless, and full of peace. There can be no truer expression; yet, whenever we describe Divinity, it is as something remote, forbidding and solemn. Do not think for a moment that I do not encourage happiness. Let there be happiness unmixed with desire; joy, not surrounded by the shadows of care, but joy blessed of God. Let our torches be lighted by the Divine Light—the Light of Love. And let there be no fear, for where there is that element of fear there is the element of darkness. No matter what comes upon us, let us hold to the Ideal, so that our impurities—our ignorance and imperfections—may be burned to ashes, and we become more and more like the Seeing One, the Golden One.

The soul is often symbolized by the term golden—do you know why? Gold is placed in the fire before it is shaped, but the fire does not spoil it; it only enhances its beauty. As you go through this world, do not think that at every moment you will meet with pleasant circumstances. Our prayer should not be always: "O Lord, place me in safe conditions," but rather: "Whatever comes, may I have faith, strength and virtue to meet it." Let that be the fervent prayer of our soul. Before th light all darkness vanishes. Light always reveals; it destroys every element of darkness. Therefore let us lay aside our vain and proud thoughts, and cease to brood over our imperfections, for that is foolishness. Instead, let us go forward, armed with love, holding high the torch of Faith, kindled by the light of Truth. I am going to ask you to keep that thought pictured in your mind, that you may not blunder, or, if you do blunder, that you may not brood, or be weighed down with self-depreciation. Always seek to have the spirit of children who know that there is a wise Father protecting them, and a tender Mother whose love never fails. With these thoughts let us enter the sanctuary of silence.

O Supreme Being—Mother and Father of us all—
Thou art the One to be known, the One to be loved.
Thou art One without a second, unfailing in Thy mercy—
Giver of all blessings, Embodiment of all blessedness.
Do Thou bestow upon us Thy blessings, and surround us with Thy protecting love.
And as we pray for our own health, prosperity, and safety,
Do not let us forget that the best prayers—the prayers most acceptable to the Deity—are those for others.

When we forget to ask anything for ourselves; when, in our ardor, we pray for others' happiness, for the relief of the sick and the suffering, for our friends, and those whom we may not think of as our friends—even our enemies—then are we worthy to be called Children of God.

Ye who love and serve without thought of self
are blessed.
Ye who give your all and seek no gain
Are blessed again and evermore.
For what shrine more holy than the selfless heart
What offering richer than the gift that asketh
no return?

We may feel hesitant—incapable of carrying such a big Ideal. But think of Christ and Buddha, of St. Francis, and all the saints and master-spirits of the world, who forgot themselves in love of others. The soul will never be satisfied without following the perfect way. So let us, as we begin this New Year of 1929, start with fresh hope, great courage, invincible faith, and unalterable devotion to Him, bearing in mind that He is the Source of our life—the Goal of our existence; that we are part of Him, and that nothing shall be impossible to us as we cling to Him with humility, devotion and surrender of spirit.

As the Swami uttered the last words of the Service, chimes rang softly from an adjoining room, announcing the midnight hour, and the birth of 1929. Without—sirens, bells, and screaming whistles! Within—stillness, peace, and the joy of renewed consecration to a blissful Ideal.

REPORT

CHRISTMASTIDE IN BOSTON

On Friday, Jan. 4th, terminating a six weeks' sojourn, Swami Paramananda left the Vedanta Centre, Boston, for the Ananda-Ashrama, California. Like the coming of spring, his visit in the east infused both work and workers with new life, so that now fresh hopes and plans are burgeoning into leaf and blossom. It is difficult to designate all the varied activities which claimed the Swami's time, for many of them were connected with the personal needs of students and friends; also Christmastide always means busy hours for the Centre, in preparation for the Christmas-eve Service, which this year, may be said to have included the day before, which happened to be Sunday. Even as last Christmas, the altar was transformed into a woodland shrine, radiant with light and lily, and bearing at its heart, like a drop of blood, one ruby-red vigil, symbolic, for Christian souls, of the Christ-story. Another altar, fairy-like in its loveliness, stood in the great front window of the

Centre, framed by rows of flickering candles, and bearing a picture of the Christ-child, who smiled down on passers-by through a web of ferns and flowers. The atmosphere created was that which men associate with the spirit of Christ, simple, tender, lowly. Absolutely spontaneously the Swami spoke and many were there to hear him, bringing as an offering, depth of feeling and appreciation. Some also gave of their song, others of their skill on organ and 'cello, so that the choir was full-throated and ably accompanied. In "A New Year Benediction," published in this number, an account is given of the New Year Service, which, like the crest of a wave, carried the blessings of Christmas over into 1929.

FRIENDS' ASSOCIATION

This was the Swami's first Christmas at the Centre for several years, and it seemed to mark a new phase in the Boston work, which has necessarily been in abeyance during the time of the Ashrama's upbuilding. This time of obscuration, however, seems only to have strengthened and deepened the roots, for never before has there been manifested a more enthusiastic spirit than during the last few weeks, nor greater response from friends old and new. As a result, the Swami has inaugurated in Boston that which has proved so propitious at the Ashrama—the "Vedanta Friends' Association," which meets, as at the Ashrama, every Thursday night to partake of a dinner prepared by the Swami, or by his niece Charushila Devi. It is not the Hindu dishes which draw people, however, so much as the intimate gathering afterwards and the Swami's informal talk. Even during his absence these dinners are continuing, Charushila Devi sharing with all who come her fund of lovely tales and legends from Hindustan.

It can be seen that the Swami devoted himself almost entirely to the immediate needs of the Centre, speaking outside only once or twice—at the Fellowship of Faiths, the Sunday afternoon following his arrival, when he addressed a large audience on the "Vedanta Way of Life," and at the beautiful country estate of Miss Annie Payson Call, at whose invitation he spoke, early in December, before a group of young boys who are under her tutelage and guidance.

Mention must also be made of the funeral service which the Swami conducted for his dear friend, Mrs. Frohock who passed out on Christmas Eve, at about the hour the Swami was giving his Christmas message. Eight years before, he had rendered a similar service to Mr. Frohock, when death severed those two who for over sixty years had been all in all to each other, even as one, through loss of family, loss of friends, and loss of all worldly possessions. In that hour, the Swami's words and presence were to her as a Divine solace, and her repeated prayer has been that when her time came to go, Mr. Frohock's Service should be repeated as nearly as possible in every detail. Stricken as she was by his loss, it seemed as if her going would not be long delayed, but Fate willed otherwise, and held her throughout long years, helpless, upon a bed of pain. Helpless? No, that was a wrong word to use; triumphant rather—a lonely old woman those flaming spirit put to shame every complaining heart, and lifted her mind above all limitations. Her devotion was the key. She lived in the thought of the Swami and the ideal for which he stood; waking and sleeping it was her guiding star. How right that his voice should sound in her dead ears, bidding her Godspeed—as she lay so peacefully in the little chapel—and filling the hearts of those present with the sense, not of death but of eternal blessedness!

ANANDA ASHRAMA

The Ananda Ashrama naturally felt keenly Swami Paramananda's absence during the Christmas season, but radiated his spirit through its Christmas Eve Service, and its household festivities. During the Swami's absence, all Services and Classes at the Ashrama, and at the Pasadena and the Los Angeles Reading-rooms, are conducted by Gayatri Devi of India. People invariably speak of her presentation of the Vedanta message as "clear and universal—like the Swami's," while her sincerity and simplicity are giving those who hear her a new point of view regarding Indian womanhood. Her presence in the West is but another expression of Swami Paramananda's recent effort to bind East and West in a more practical and concrete form. In Boston, while he is away, the work is conducted by Sister Daya, and by Charushila Devi of India, who, by her pure spirit, his given inspiration in Boston, even as Gayatri Devi has done in California.

BOSTON "TEMPLE OF THE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT"

The Vedanta Centre of Boston is happy to announce the purchase of a new home for its work, at 32 the Fenway. This spacious and beautiful residence, conveniently located on a quiet street of great dignity, commands a wonderful view of Fenway Park with its river, trees, and wide spaces, bordered by public buildings. The ground floor of the new Centre is to be transformed into a Boston "Temple of the Universal Spirit," and reconstruction work is now going on under Swami Paramananda's supervision. Many members, out of the fulness of their hearts, have contributed toward this new venture; not only financially, but by many acts of service, the desire being to share the burden of responsibility. The Swami has established a Temple Chest into which are dropped the small offerings which go to make up the whole.

The day of Dedication has been set for Feb. 24.

AN APOLOGY

The transfer of publication of the "Message" from California to Boston has delayed the issuing of the January number. To make up for this the January and February numbers have been combined. Further issues will appear as promptly as possible.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

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March, 1929

Spiritual Rebirth

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Message of the East

“And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East.”
—*Ezekiel.*
“Light shall come again from the East.”
—*Tyndall.*
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SPIRITUAL REBIRTH

By Swami Paramananda

SOME look upon the soul with wonder; some speak about it with wonder; some hear about it with wonder; and yet others, even after hearing about it, know it not. The dweller in the body of every one is ever indestructible; therefore thou shouldst not grieve over any creature.”

This is a very ancient thought, given to us in the Bhagavad-Gita, the great spiritual classic of the Indo-Aryans; but it is not a thought peculiar to Indian culture; we find its echo throughout all human investigation.

Plato tells us that there are two kinds of existence, the one visible, the other invisible. That which is invisible is unchanging, while the visible is always changing and shifting.

Emerson expresses the same concept in regard to the soul: “*We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities, which house today in this mortal frame, shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame. . . but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in my grave.*”

Likewise there is something very significant in what Carlyle says reflecting on this theme:

"*To the eye of vulgar logic what is man? An omniverous biped which wears breeches. To the eye of pure reason what it it? A soul, a spirit, a divine apparition.*"

Then going back as far as we can go, to the dawn of human culture and unfoldment, we find this idea stated with pure spiritual sentiment by the ancient Rishis of India:

"*By the old age of the body, That* (*the Spirit*) *does not age; by the death of the body, That does not die. It is the Self, free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst.*"

This unfamiliar Song of the Soul may fall upon our physical ear as a strange and mysterious melody, foreign to all normal experience; yet its definite expression evokes the Spirit of man, and awakens in him a new hope—hope for a freer and fuller life. How can we know that the soul of man is not aged or worn through years? How can we be certain that he does not die, when we witness death at every turn? What can we understand by such a definition? Is it that there is a condition of being quite different from our present state, something we do not now possess, but which some day we may inherit through our good deeds, after we are dead, and bereft of our physical attributes? This is a question which comes to every thinking mind, although there are some who refuse to face it. It can be only a postponement, however, for the question comes again and again. In the days of our health and prosperity we may choose to ignore the possibility of another existence, but sooner or later we are forced to face it. The problem of the soul is an eternal one. And it was not alone the people of India who discussed it. Men of all times have tried to find a solution, and there have been those who testified that they had found it. Throughout human history great figures have arisen, who had evolved their soul nature and found access to another realm. Their description of the soul is identical. With them it was not a question of fancy or phantasy, but something very real and definite. One and all, they bear testimony to man's dual nature. He is infinite, but believes himself to be finite; he is immortal, and yet fears death. So the Bhagavad-Gita tells us: "*He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy, like an external foe. The Supreme Self of the self-subjugated and serene-minded, is ever undisturbed in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, as well as in honor and dishonor.*"

Immediately another question arises, "Are there, then, two entities in the human body?" Yes, and no. There seem to be two, but in cases of great spiritual exaltation they become one, and death is overcome. That which dies is the natural man, whom Emerson defines as the "eating, drinking, sleeping man," affected by heat and cold, pleasure and pain, jealousy and anger. Almost all humanity falls under that category. This is the type that belongs to mortality. We see him everywhere about us. We share his limitations. He changes; he dies; because he is a product of the earth. He thinks of himself primarily as a physical entity, and that is the reason he feels the aches and pains of the physical plane. This, however, varies according to the mentality. There is the purely material man, absorbed in bodily existence, and, side by side with him, perhaps, one who has given himself to intellectual pursuits, and is less aware of his material surroundings. His mind is constantly overcoming the physical. There is not so much density. As we go higher, we find even less consciousness of body, until at last we arrive at a type that looks upon it only as a garb for man to wear at his pleasure, and is never thwarted by it. This is the spiritual type, and of such are the seers, the mystics, the saviours, and the prophets. How do they differ from us? Only in refinement. They have same kind of body, or nearly so. The difference is in quality. There is more transparency. A room which is neglected seems dark, because the window glass is covered with dirt and dust; it is no longer transparent. But when the dust is removed the light shines through. Same way it is with the heart of man.

In the Vedic revelation we are told not to start with the hypothesis that man is born a sinner, a condemned entity; just the opposite. Man is born Spirit; primarily he is of God. To forget that vital fact is a terrible calamity—the only real sin. It is the cause of all our sufferings. We suffer, not because of some doom thrown upon us, but because of our voluntary acceptance of ignorance. What remedy have we for this disease? Certainly we need a remedy, when man, who is endowed with so much power, goodness, and virtue, altogether forgets his divine heritage, and goes forth like a beggar; even, sometimes, like a criminal. Does the cure lie in education? Purely secular training often fails to call forth the best in man. Sometimes it tends to make him cold and unfeeling. We must find something other than merely polishing the intellect. It is not that this is without its use. Intellectual development is a valuable achievement. In fact there is not so much difference as we may imagine between the intellectual and the spiritual. There should be easy access from one to the other. The trouble is we block the channel whence comes our true inspiration, and then we wonder what is wrong with our life.

Parents cannot possibly teach their children unless they have something to teach them. Merely sending them to the best school will not suffice. The moral principle has to be imparted, and that cannot be done through mere words. If you believe in the soul, you can convince another; but if you have any doubt about it, you will not be able to, for you have not convinced yourself. If you believe in the power of love, you can reach any one through your love; but if you have any hatred in your nature, if you are a slave of emotion—of anger, jealousy, and such feelings—all that you may say to your children will have very little effect. Education is unfoldment. It does not mean tearing down what we already possess. Not in the least. We do not tear down the body to find the immortal soul. We must seek that which gives life. If the mind is open to the radiant light of the soul, we feel exuberant; we feel great inspiration, and whatever we perform becomes effective. If, however, we feel deadness in our inner being, all that we may do will be of little use to ourselves or to others.

You have heard a great deal of reincarnation. I am not going to impose it on you as a belief necessary for salvation, but it does hold the only logical hypothesis for life, the only scientific explanation. The other day, when travelling on a train, I saw a youth not more than twenty-five years of age, whose whole body was distorted. He could not stand, nor sit normally, nor even drink a glass of water. It was painful to see. Naturally I wanted to know what was the cause of it. So I asked a gentleman if he knew what the matter was, and whether or not the trouble was inherited. He said he did not know, and he added: "It is one of the things I do not understand about life; one of the things I cannot understand." That is a terrible confession. We can understand, and we should try to do so.

There is no anarchy or accident in the cosmic universe. There is no ill distribution of favor or disfavor. Our life is as we produce it through our thought, through our aspiration, and through our action. No man can do anything better or bigger than his thoughts inspire him to do. A person does not become a criminal by chance, nor commit suicide by chance. Always it is the mind which is the turning-point. You may say: "But why do we see these things in children? Why do we see one vicious, another angelic? Why is one born a genius; another, just the opposite?" Why? What is the reason behind it? We often find that we cannot locate these traits in father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, or back many, many generations. So heredity does not bring the solution. The soul itself is the index. Every soul carries with it its past, and is constantly building its future. Thus we go on evolving, shifting, and changing until we find our fulfilment. And where do we find it? Not in the material. Suppose man were granted three hundred or five hundred years more of physical life, do you imagine that in that time he would evolve and become perfect? In the short time we have—fifty, seventy-five, or a hundred years—we are constantly putting off the important things. We say: "I cannot do this now, there is so much else to be done—my family, my business, this and that—" and we die without accomplishing. It would be the same were the years of our life doubled. The trend of our mind would carry us on.

One of our great mystic teachers gives us this parable. A man is standing on the sea-shore longing to enter the water, but he does not dare to take the plunge because of the waves. So he stands there, waiting for them to subside, and of course there is no cessation. This gives the picture of our life. We are always waiting for more time, for a better opportunity. Naturally, we have our duties. If we did not, we would feel very dull, and our life would be unproductive. Duties, obligations, business, are all good disciplines; through them we purify ourselves, go from the lesser to the greater. There is, however, another duty which we cannot afford to neglect, and that is the duty of looking within our own soul. Whenever we enter the field of action, be it through business or charity, it is our habit to survey our material resources, so as not to go beyond our means. Same way we should look to our inner resources. And do not think that this inward searching will result in finding nothing but blankness. If we are sincere, it will give us a fresh start—we shall feel just as if we were born again.

All the creeds of the world have recognized spiritual rebirth. Way back in human history we find it symbolized in forms and rituals, baptisms and initiations. They all imply a new beginning. Sometimes this is spoken of as spiritual birth; sometimes as resurrection: the man of flesh is looked upon as dead; the man of Spirit, as risen. There are many among us who are naturally puzzled by the strangeness of this idea. What does being born again imply? What else can it imply save that it is wholly different from our physical birth. "*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.*"

In India, A Brahmin youth, after he attains a certain age, is given the holy thread, or the badge of spiritual life. There is a very elaborate ceremony of fasting, prayer, and every form of self-discipline to fit him for his new vocation. When he completes this he becomes *Dwija,* or Twice-born.

Then again, when the Guru, or spiritual teacher, initiates his disciple, and gives him the vow of *Brahmacharya* (life of God-consecration), he often changes the name which he received at birth, and replaces it by another bearing spiritual significance; such as, Haridasa, the Servant of the Lord, or Satya-Kama, Truth-desiring, etc. The idea is to wipe out from the disciple's mind all past associations and impressions of the worldly life, and start him with a new and fresh consciousness.

Also the life of the Sannyasin, who renounces all worldly goods to obtain God-consciousness and serve his fellows, is a very definite illustration of being born of the Spirit. When a man takes the vow of Sannyasa, or final renunciation, he not only renounces his material possessions, he renounces his name, fame, and all earthly connections. In fact, he renounces this life in its entirety, and, as the last act, he performs his own funeral service. So, as a man of the world, he is no longer existent, but is reborn into a new life, and accordingly receives a new name. Following the prevalent custom, after this he is not supposed to be asked his original name, age, or anything pertaining to his former life. He has already cast off all that, and now exists as Spirit-born, or man of God. The whole world becomes his home; all peoples are his brethren. He has neither caste nor creed, but has become part of the great cosmic family.

The import of the whole matter is this: unless a man is born of the Spirit, it is impossible for him to find access into the higher realm of spiritual existence. Through our physical birth we inherit organs of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, thinking and feeling, and this gives us opportunities for enlarging our field of experience in the world of matter. If, likewise, we would experience things pertaining to the spiritual world, we must first acquire proper instruments of perception. When a man is born of Spirit, his eyes can perceive spiritual beauty, and his ears can hear the unspoken word.

Now the question rises: can such theories meet the test of science? It depends wholly what boundary lines we set to the province of science. If science depends solely on the evidence of our physical senses, then certainly we shall not find any satisfaction when we enquire into such ethereal matters. But if science transcends the physical, and looks into the question of spiritual, then there will be no crash, but, rather, self-evident recognition. "*Flesh is flesh, and Spirit is Spirit!*" We must learn to take each at its own valuation. When we receive spiritual rebirth, it does not in any sense mean that our body is annihilated. On the contrary, our body may be greatly strengthened and stimulated by this spiritual imminence, as we find illustrated in the lives of illumined teachers and saints. Even their physical life assumed greater beauty, greater divinity, and an ever-growing spiritual loveliness.

We may like to imagine ourselves as men of Spirit, but how can we, when this turbulent activity within and without us is making us feel over-weighted and over-burdened? The trend of our mind must be given a new turn. It is not a question of fancy. No matter how much we may want to believe we are immortal, so long as we cling to this apparent nature of the flesh, see nothing else, and believe in nothing else, there will be deadness within. The majority of us are carrying this dead weight. We do not have to carry it. It is what defeats our whole purpose. Yet how may we rid ourselves of it? First thing is to awaken within us the sense of soul-life—its sacredness. We cannot do this without having a feeling of light, of new life, inspiration, and great immensity.

Man has confined himself within the limits of his little fleshly dwelling—its narrow walls—and he fights and quarrels, trying to protect his rights. He feels suffocated; his Spirit suffers; yet, through misdirected zeal, he often does something which causes more suffering. This is not the way of escape. Escape lies through expansion. The call of the

Spirit is ever urging us forward, and until we are able to respond to that call we cannot play our part well as human beings; we cannot do our duties in the community; and certainly we have no access to the spiritual life.

Perhaps you may say: "We do not have time for this inner seeking and investigation; we want a church to go to, and a creed to follow." That is well; have as much of these as you desire. Cut and dried religion may possess some value; we may need it to a certain extent; but do not lose sight of the fact that our relationship between ourselves and our Maker must be first hand. No one else can give it to us, save through inspiration and impetus; and also, no one else can deprive us of it.

Every morning we should arise with the sense of soul-consciousness, with the feeling that we are of Spirit. It is our bounden duty. Moreover, it is good to remind children of this, to make them aware of that which is above and beyond the flesh. It is strength that conquers weakness; it is light that conquers darkness; it is life that conquers death. Do we know that life? Realizing it, one is invincible. It is that which made Christ stand up before his enemies, unthwarted; which made Buddha triumphant over death. An incident is told in connection with his life. He had nothing but love in his heart; yet, for that very reason, there were some who hated him. Often the fact that a man is all-loving irritates those of an opposite nature. They resent the feeling of difference, and would like to remove him from the earth; just as the priests felt about Jesus. Every priest is not holy. Although they are called to the spiritual vocation, they do not all have the spirit of love, or right understanding. Thus, among the priesthood of India, there were a few who conspired against the Lord Buddha. They felt he was interfering with their profession; for to them religion was a professional fact, a matter of self-interest. So they engaged a band of murderers to take his life. These men approached him when he was unprotected, save for the divine protection of love; but when they tried to attack him, they were disarmed; not, as we may imagine, through supernatural powers sent by God from heaven to shield His holy child, but by the power of love which he already had within him. It is so great, that power of love! If we have it; live in it; radiate it, it is like an armor. They could not strike through that.

We dwell in this world of facts, and think that they alone are real. They have a relative reality; but there is something far more real that we know not of. It is the life of the soul. When we are born in it; when we rise with it, we know a sense of invincible reality. Everything is transformed. Instead of being fretful and complaining, we take a different attitude. It does not matter what others do. When they try deliberately to cheat or hurt us, we do not strike back; we have a higher standard. Even when we possess only a visionary concept of this idea of rebirth, it gives us more trust in Divinity. When we realize it as the practical background of our life, every day we shall feel that we are born anew of that great Spirit. Naught else is. Anything that has existence has come from that eternal Source of existence. Anything that has life comes from that eternal Life. If, through our purity of concept, through fervent attitude, through discrimination, we are able to relate ourselves with That, and remain related to It, what a tremendous factor we can become in the life of the world! This cannot be accomplished, however, by those who look upon themselves just as insignificant mortals—not by that type; but only by those who look beyond, who have access to that which is greater than the narrow sphere of physical existence.

This may all seem to you uncertain, something belonging to the province of imagination. Suppose it does. Is it not the duty of every rational being to investigate? If we are willing to investigate the material facts of life, should we not go further, and see if there is not something more, something within? Let us strive, therefore; for as we strive, we shall realize. There will come the dawning vision of that Infinitude, which is before us, behind us, and all about us. All the dreams we have been holding—that we are mortals, perishable, frail, incapable of doing great deeds—will vanish, and in their place we shall know a grandeur born of the Eternal Spirit.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. —*Jesus the Christ*

Therefore we must ascend again towards the Good, the desired of every Soul. Anyone who has seen This, knows it is beautiful. To attain it is for those that take the upward path, who will set their faces towards It, who will divest themselves of all that we have put on in our descent.
—*Plotinus*

There is no poverty for him who hath set Thee in his heart; such a one cannot say, O that I had! When Thou bringest life to men's hearts by Thy beauty, there is indeed life! —*Akhnaton, King of Egypt*

Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. —*St. Paul*

One may leap to heaven from the very slums. Only rise!
—*Seneca*

LOVE WORKETH NO ILL

From the Teachings of Mih Teih

(A Chinese philosopher who lived, it is thought, just a little before the time of Mencius, 371 B.C.)

Our Master, the philosopher Mih, said: "The mutual attacks of state on state, the mutual usurpations of family on family, the mutual robberies of man on man . . . these, and such as these, are the things injurious to the Empire. And from what do we find, on examination, that these injurious things are produced? Is it not from want of mutual love? . . . Here is a prince who only knows to love his own state, and does not love his neighbor's. He, therefore, does not shrink from raising all the power of the State to attack his neighbor. Here is the chief of a family who only knows to love it, and does not love his neighbor's. . . . Here is a man who only knows to love his own person, and does not love his neighbor's. He, therefore, does not shrink from using all his strength to rob his neighbor. . . . Yea, men in general, not loving one another, the strong make prey of the weak; the rich do despite to the poor; the noble are insolent to the mean; and the deceitful impose upon the stupid. All the miseries, usurpations, enmities and hatreds in the world, when traced to their origin, will be found to arise from the want of mutual love. . . . On this account the benevolent condemn (this lack)."

They may condemn it, but how shall they change it?

Our Master said: "They may change it by universal, mutual love, and by the interchange of mutual benefits. . . . It would lead to the regarding another kingdom as one's own; another family as one's own; another person as one's own. . . . When a man loves others, they respond to and love him; when a man benefits others, they respond to and benefit him. . . . What difficulty is there in the matter?"

TRUE RESURRECTION

By Gerrard Winstanley

(An English mystic of the 17th Century)

Friends, do not mistake the resurrection of Christ. You expect that He shall come in one single person, as He did when He came to suffer and die. . . . Let me tell you that if you look for Him under the notion of one single man after the flesh, to be your Saviour, you shall never, never taste salvation by Him. . . . If you expect or look for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, you must know that the Spirit within the flesh is the Jesus Christ, and you must see, feel, and know from Himself His own resurrection within you, if you expect life and peace by Him. For He is the Life of the World; that is, of every particular son and daughter of the Father . . . for every one hath the Light of the Father within himself, which is the mighty man Christ Jesus. And He is now rising and spreading Himself in these His sons and daughters, and so rising from one to many persons, till He enlightens the whole creation (mankind) in every branch of it, and covers this earth with knowledge as the waters cover the sea. . . . And this is to be saved by Jesus Christ; for that mighty man of Spirit hath taken up His habitation within your body; and your body is His body, and now His Spirit is your Spirit, and so you are become one with Him and with the Father. This is the faith of Christ, when your flesh is subject to the Spirit of Righteousness, as the flesh of Christ was subject. And this is to believe in Christ, when the actings and breathings of your soul are within the centre of the same Spirit in which the man Jesus Christ lived, acted and breathed.

Verily God it is who causeth the grain and the date-stone to put forth; he bringeth forth the living from the dead, and the dead from the living. —*Mohammed*

THE SACRED PACT

*A Legend of the Omahas**

The following myth—upon which is based the faith and practice of the Washiska Athin, the sacred Shell Society among the Omahas—is a remarkable revelation of the Omaha Indian's attitude toward life—all life—and death. It implies the interchange between man and nature, his close kinship with that mysterious instinctual intelligence which is the light of the lower kingdoms, and his utter dependence upon it when he stands alone in the wilderness. The tribesman, of whom this ancient legend tells, was, no doubt, a primitive barbarian; but, at least, he hunted from necessity, not for sport, and acknowledged his profound debt to those lesser lives, which he here depicts as giving themselves in voluntary sacrifice, that man, their elder brother, might live and thrive.

There are further implications which the reader will sense for himself: the giving all for all; the law of correspondence, which makes the shell twin sister to the star; the eternity of true being, which "does not slay nor is it slain."

The editor regrets that owing to lack of space, the legend has had to be cut (though these cuts are not indicated) and certain explanatory notes substituted occasionally for its more picturesque descriptions.

The whole tale may be purely symbolic, or it may be based on some ancient tradition around which symbolism has grown. In any case, it is best for each reader to make his own interpretation. For a true symbol has as many readings as there are human hearts on the search after truth.

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*Obtained by Miss Alice C. Fletcher and Mr. Francis La Flesche. It appeared in the 27th Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1905-6, Page 509, etc., and was reprinted, with some stylistic revisions, by Dr. William Norman Guthrie in "Leaves of the Greater Bible", Vol. II., No. five, from which the present version is adapted.

THE LEGEND

Once, long long ago, a Stranger came to the village, where he was entertained by the chief, and all the principal men. Now there was in the tribe a man, a good hunter, who never put himself forward, being by nature quiet and unassuming. His exceeding modesty, however, troubled his wife not a little, for she was ambitious, and nowise shared her husband's shrinking from observation. She learned of the Stranger's presence, and noting in what high esteem he was held by all, resolved that her husband should also show him hospitality. Quoth she to her husband: "Thou wilt never attain to great station in the tribe so long as thou refrainest from seeking promotion. Bid, therefore, this stranger to our lodge. For I will make ready a feast, and thou, even as all the principal men of our people, shalt be his host."

At the time appointed the Stranger came. He wore his hair parted on either side and standing as a crested ridge back from his forehead; his leggings were yellow, and fair with cunning needle work; his footgear was black; he wore no shirt, but donned his robe of pelt with the hair thereof turned outward. He was armed with a mighty bow, and at his back there hung a quiver of otter skin full of sharp arrows. The man, his wife, and the four children, clad in their gayest attire, awaited his coming to bid him welcome. Of the children the eldest twain were lads, the third was a little maid, and the youngest, a manchild—all goodly in fashion, and ruddy with health and cheer.

Now the wife set before the guest a dish of deer-meat and marrow beans, roasted with the savory fat of the raccoon. The Stranger ate, held free converse with the family, and, within a little while, rendered thanks with courteous dignity, and went his way. After a few days he bade fare-well to the village, and was heard of no more all summer, nor the following winter.

(He came the next spring and the next, and always the woman and her husband entertained him, and always he departed without giving an account of himself to them or to the village. On the fourth spring, however, ere he took his leave, he revealed a little of his purpose to his host and hostess.)

"I am not as other men," he said, "but a mysterious Being, skilled in mysteries. I have gone far in quest of the right persons to whom I might make known these secrets. I have scanned you closely, and am well content. The time hath come when all the tribe go forth on their yearly hunt. Stay you even where you are. After the people have departed, we will travel a little space together. Then I will reveal unto you these mysteries. Yet I shall expect a return of service. What the same must be, when my hour hath come, I shall make known to you."

(The tribe moved away to the great hunting fields; but the man and his little family tarried behind with the Stranger, and often at night, when the father kept watch, he would wonder much about him. Finally the Stranger commanded that they make ready for the journey, and, under his guidance, they fared forth. All along the way he pointed out roots and herbs, and made known their virtue, instructing his companions in many ways. After a time, he bade the man go to a certain place, and watch well if there be any wild creatures nigh. When the man reached the spot, lo, there was a young buck, which he shot, and twelve deer beside. Again and again, at the Stranger's command, he went forth in this way, and found game in profusion—deer, bear, and buffalo—and ever the Stranger, after giving the children each a shoulder of meat, would direct him where to conceal the remainder. Thus the store waxed great.

There were other times when, sitting in a certain order before the fire, the Stranger would teach them all sacred songs, singing the whole night through, till the younger children fell asleep, and the dawn came. At such times, in the stillness between the songs, the wierd cries of the divers living creatures could be heard as though rejoicing. When morning came, the Stranger, as was his wont, would fetch water for all to drink, and would then bathe the children, and dress their hair tenderly, to the continued amazement of the parents.)

By now he had got him the children's full trust and love, but the father waxed ever more anxious in secret. He pondered deeply over the Stranger's ways, and he and his wife would hold converse together apart, wondering much about the man. At the last, they came to be of one mind, and were comforted: their benefactor was yearning for his own children, and for this cause he was so careful of their little ones. Had he not already brought them great good fortune in the hunt? They desired not only to express their gratitude, but they wanted to put him also to the test, whether he were a man or no. They had not much to offer, for that they were poor when the Stranger first became their guest, but they resolved to withhold nothing from him that was rightfully theirs. Wherefore they came before their guest and spoke unfeignedly: "We have not much, kind friend, but we have such things as these thou seest, and besides, we have our children. Take thy choice. In sincerity we offer thee all we have to give." They were well assured he would never choose their children, but, to their horror, he returned to them their goods, and said: "Since you have offered them to me, I accept of the children." Then did the Stranger speak plainly to man and wife: "Be not afraid. I am not a man. I am the Spirit of an animal. I have been sent by the Wild Beasts that dwell near this great inland water. They sat in solemn Council, and, lo, it is I who am sent as their messenger to you!"

Then he went on to say that there were seven chief ones, leaders in this Council of the Beasts—the black bear, the buffalo, the elk, the deer, the cougar, the gray wolf, and the polecat. These were to be specially knit in bonds of kinship unto the man. There were other seven living creatures that should be the woman's kindred; to wit, the otter, the raccoon, the mink, the swan, the silver fox, the squirrel, and the owl. At this solemn Council, the former seven conferred with the latter seven, and all of one mind were they, proffering help to man. Then the sun was appealed to, and the sun consented that the animals should help man, and give him of their own powers. The sun said: "I shall stay above, and look down upon my children." The moon was asked what her pleasure might be, and she gave willingly leave: "I, also, will stay my course on high, and look down kindly on my children." The lightning made agreement to fray them secret trails. Then said all together: "Go forth, search diligently for the right person to whom this great power shall be given in trust for man." Even such was the account of the whole matter the Stranger delivered then to the father and mother, when he accepted the gift of their children. And their hearts burned, but they gave no token of their fear.

After the venison gotten by the father had been dried, and hidden under earth where he alone could find it, the family moved forward until they drew nigh unto the marge of a great water. Willows stood in rows on its immediate banks, and lo, it was very still and beautiful. Now from the Inland Sea rose sheer a high rock, and there lay also in the midst of the water an island crowned with large, wide-branching trees. On a smooth beach the water lapped the shore, and the fish did leap up into the glistering sunshine.

(Here beside these still depths, the Stranger announced his departure. "Lo," he said, "I am about to leave you, and I shall take with me the children you love, and have given me. But I will come again. You shall find me on the shore of the Sea. I will make myself known to you in what you shall find there." The next morning there was no wind, and the water of the Inland Sea lay still as crystal. The Stranger bade the mother array her children in their gayest clothes, make the tent fair, and spread out a pelt at the back of the fire with its head to the westward. Then he commanded the father and mother to sit next to him in due order, but the children he sent forth to play within ear-shot. He spoke secretly and solemnly to the parents, reminding them of all he had taught them, and gave them detailed instruction as to the time and the manner in which they should bring others into the fellowship of the Living Creatures, and thus pass on the knowledge and power he had given them; the woman to seven women; the man to seven men. At the end, he sang a new song which was taken up by all the Living Creatures dwelling on the high rock in the Sea of glass.)

When the songs were ended, the Stranger bade the mother summon her eldest child to the tent. She moved all around the lodge, slow, lithe; stealthily went forth outside, stood still, and called aloud to her first-born son. Then she came in, and took again her seat as one afraid, that would not let any one discern her thought. Soon the springing steps of her eldest son were heard, coming nearer and nearer the tent. He lifted the door flap to enter. The Stranger shouted "Hah!" and the stout lad fell forward, as smitten by a bolt from the unseen, striking the pole that stood before the fireplace with his forehead. And, lo, he lay stark dead.

The Stranger bade the father and mother lift him up and lay him gently on the south side of the skin, his head to the westward. Dumb, without a wail of sorrow, they did as they were bidden. Then the Stranger arose and painted the youth with holy signs. When the painting was fully done, he took again his seat, and bade the mother cause her second child to come. Again she moved all around the lodge, slow, silent, stealthily, and passed outside and stood, and called her second son by name, and returned to her own seat. Soon he was heard to draw nigh very quickly. But as he stooped to enter, the Stranger cried aloud "Hah!" as before, and the boy fell prone as his elder brother had done. Then the Stranger commanded the father and mother to carry the boy, and lay him on the skin to the left of his brother. And they did as they were bidden, and made no sign of grief. Then the Stranger arose and painted the second child.

Then he bade the mother cause her third child to come, and she arose and did as before, making no moan, and went forth and stood, and called her only daughter, in a clear voice, with no quaver. Soon they heard the little maiden skipping gaily toward the tent, singing for gladness as she came. As she thrust her head in, the Stranger cried out, "Hah!" and the little girl fell dead, as her two brothers had done before. Again the father and mother, speechless, without a quiver of eye or tremble of hand, at the bidding of the Stranger, lifted the dear child and laid her on the pelt at the left hand of her brethren. The Stranger then arose and painted the same red lines of life across the little face, and on the arms, and from the dimpled chin even down to the heart, as on her brothers.

Then he bade that the mother cause also her youngest child to come. Hardly had she done so, when they heard the little lad running very fast, full of joy to answer the call. He thrust his head eagerly into the tent, but the Stranger as before cried "Hah!" and the child fell prone, stark dead. Then the Stranger arose and painted him as he had the other children, save that the body and arms above the elbow were a brown hue to signify the warm earth.

Whereupon the Stranger made plain to the father and mother how the red lines were the sun's rays that give life; the blue on the body of the eldest was the clear sky; the blue spots on the body of the second son, the sky of night; the blue dots on the girl, the moon and the stars of night. Moreover he bade them mark that shells are very like to stars; for rayed are they with ridges, as the stars with parting beams of light. He told them that there was a holy bird, the leader of all the Living Creatures about the Inland Sea, even the white swan, which flocked in sevens and fives. He bade them marvel long at the water of the Sea, how very smooth and still it lay; so must the mind of man be, still and gentle, shining even like to the still waters.

When the Stranger had made an end of all his lore, he sang yet two new songs, and once more the Living Creatures about the Sea joined in the singing, while those on the rock smote upon the drum till the air did thrill and throb as though the whole sky rolled with echoing far thunders and strange voices.

(Then the Stranger bade the father and mother take up the eldest boy and stretch him out on the beach face downward, his head toward the great Sea. He bade them place the second son so his head should touch the feet of the elder, and so on, to the youngest, whom they laid down tenderly, with his little head touching the feet of his sister.)

After this, the Stranger entered the tent, and laid aside his hairy robe, and came forth, and calmly, with no word of leave-taking or thank, walked away upon the water, even to the place where the sky and the sheen of the water meet, and vanished utterly in the beyond. Soon a great wave arose, and rolled like a standing wall over the Sea's quiet surface, until it reached the very shore where lay the children. Then it broke, and rushed, and covered the body of the eldest son, and washed it in after, mysteriously. The father and mother stood silently watching, and, as they looked, in the far distance, behold, the Stranger loomed where sky and water meet, and disappeared. Then came a second wave, like a higher wall of crystal, and swept over the lake which had become tranquil again. On it rolled, until it flung itself over the body of the second child, covered it glisteringly, and drew the body after it into the deep. As the wave lapsed back again, and vanished, and the lake became still once more, lo, the Stranger arose by the horizon edge, who looked at the parents fondly, and vanished. Then came another wave, mightier than those before, that rolled on and on until it reached the body of the girl, slipped over it, covered it with light, and drew it down after it, below. Once more the lake was very quiet, as at first, while in the grey distance, arose the glorious form as of the Stranger. But, as he vanished again, a more mighty wave than any hitherto, uplifted its crest, rolled over the great Sea, and swept down the body of the youngest child, engulfing the little one in glitter and foam. Again the Sea became all of a sudden very still and awful to look upon, but the Stranger was seen no more.

The father and mother had watched these wondrous happenings, too sore bewildered for human fear or grief. They made no sound, they stirred not, nor did they whisper, or moan, or sigh. The silence of the lake, the death of the wind, the absence of the Stranger, the empty beach washed clear, where the children had lain prone upon their faces, wrought then an overwhelming sense of desolation in the bereaved man and woman, so that they gave vent to terrible anguish of soul. They cut their hair, rent and cast away their clothing, and, wailing piteously, ran up and down the empty beach as mad. Night shut them in; yet the man and woman wailed, until, for utter weariness, they fell on sleep. But ere the sun was up the woman arose and began afresh to wail. Her husband started awake, and joined her, wailing as he ran. The lake lay quiet, but covered now with a white silvery mist. Then, as the woman moved along the beach aimless, she remembered the words of the Stranger, and began to search, hoping that she might find something, as he had said that she would—something star-like, in which his Presence might be felt and known. On a sudden her eye caught sight of a gleam in the water. She stooped and picked up a *white* shell, and cried aloud for joy: "I have found it!" Her husband heard the cry, and began to search likewise. By and by, he too saw something shine—a dark object in the glitter, it seemed. He stooped, and drew from the water a *dark* shell. Then he too cried aloud: "I have found it!" And even as they stood, each holding a star-ribbed shell, the silver mist did part, and in the mist there opened up a shining path across the great Sea; and in the path, lo, there stood the four children, their own children, hale, strong, and happy. As the father and mother stood gazing in wonderment, the children spake to them distinctly: "Grieve not for us, dear father. Grieve not for us, dear mother. We are content. Death is not a thing that we should dread it. Not at all as you have thought, and as you think it, is Death. In course of time you too will come, and then you shall yourselves know all there is to know."

As their voices died away, the silver mist flowed together, and closed up the shimmering path along the cleft of light, and the children were seen no more; but in the mist, as through a tenuous veil, they beheld the outline of a strange and monstrous creature. It seemed as large as the great Sea itself. Its hide did bristle as with keen hairs, brown like the fell of a deer. The ridge of its back was saw-toothed with tall tufts of hair. It had branching horns as of a great tree, and hoofs like a vast deer, but a slender tail swept away, even as the outline of a beach, with a tuft at the end thereof, where it curved toward the sky to the uttermost end of the mist-covered Sea. At last the mysterious, shadowy figure melted away as naught, and the Sea lay quiet and bare before the astonished gaze of the lonely yet comforted father and mother, even a silken Sea of blessed sheen.

Then the man spake to the woman, and said: "In sooth, we have found the Mystery. Let us now fare homeward." His wife consented, for she was now content. She had beheld the children, and the words they had uttered continually dwelt in her mind and heart. So they returned together to their tent, hand in hand, like children in a dream.

(Some days later there came a runner from the tribe, sent in the fear that some ill had overtaken them. "Where are the children?" he asked. "Dead," they replied. "And the Stranger?" "He is gone away. But look at our great store of venison! It is from him, along with the power to get more at our need. Go—tell our people what the Stranger hath done for us." Amazed, the runner returned to the tribe, and the man and woman followed hard after. Once more among their own, they formed a fellowship in due time and manner, according to the directions of the Stranger, initiating into the sacred Mysteries the brethren who were found worthy.)

Not only were the man and wife thus enabled to impart their knowledge, but they bestowed also on those who were initiated into the rites and songs, some portion of the magical power granted to them by the awful Stranger, the appointed Messenger of the great Council of the Living Creatures dwelling in and about the shore of the Inland Sea—the Wild Beast Brethren—who, realizing their Brother the Man's sore need of their wit and virtue, ay, and of the flesh and blood of their chosen, had taken pity on him, that he might live, and not die; and multiply, and wax great and wise of heart.

Here endeth the secret story of the founding of the Washiska Athin, that yieldeth woodcraft, a knowledge of worts and roots, healthful and baneful unto life and death, and openeth the path through the shining mist upon the Sea, within the reach of the vast Beast of Beasts, even to where the sea and sky do meet; for there the dear dead do live, awaiting on us when we too shall walk upon the water of the glassy Sea, and be lost with them in the great, glad Light.

The ancients described death as the loosening of the cord on which God suspended the life. What we can point to are the faggots that have been consumed; but the fire is transmitted elsewhere. —*Lao Tzu.*

ALONENESS

By Sister Devamata

As the Red Indian moves through lonely forests,
Erect, silent, grave, and fearless of his foe;
So do men move through this human life
Enveloped by a silence none can penetrate,
Wrapped in an aloneness none can tear aside or lift:
Single file, silent and apart they march through the days
and years.
Let them walk erect and fearless to eternal ends.

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL

By Henri-Frederic Amiel

There is but one thing needful—to possess God. All our senses, all our powers of mind and soul, all our external resources, are so many ways of approaching the Divinity, so many modes of tasting and of adoring God. We must learn to detach ourselves from all that is capable of being lost, to bind ourselves absolutely only to what is absolute and eternal, and to enjoy the rest as a loan, a usufruct. . . . To adore, to understand, to receive, to feel, to give, to act: there is my law, my duty, my happiness, my heaven. Let come what come will—even death. Only be at peace with self, live in the presence of God, in communion with Him, and leave the guidance of existence to those universal powers against whom thou canst do nothing! If death gives me time, so much the better; if its summons is near, so much the better still; if a half-death overtakes me, still so much the better, for so the path of success is closed to me only that I may find opening before me the path of heroism, of moral greatness and resignation. Every life has its potentiality of greatness, and as it is impossible to be outside God, the best is consciously to dwell in Him.

RESURGAM

By Julia P. Dabney

How should the spirit cease
When from the prisoning flesh it wins release—
The spirit, born of the Almighty breath?
Oh rather will it be
Like the ethereal psyche breaking free
From its dark chrysalis, and joyfully
Upon ecstatic wings
Soaring aloft through God's immensity!
So shall the spirit soar, borne to the height—
A thing of light;
And ever, as fresh vision openeth,
Drinking the glories of the Infinite!

SEA OF IMMORTALITY

By Sri Ramakrishna

"*Dive deep, dive deep, dive deep, O my mind, into the Sea of Beauty.*

Make a search in the regions lower—lower down under the Sea;

You will come by the jewel, the wealth of Prema (intense love of God) . . . ."

Fear not because I ask you to plunge, to dive deep, into that Sea. Fear not. It is the Sea of Immortality.

I once said to Narendra, "God is like a sea of liquid sweet. Would you not dive into this sea? Just think of a vessel with a wide mouth, containing the syrup of sugar, and suppose you are a fly anxious to drink of the sweet liquid; where should you sit and drink? Narendra said that he would like to drink from the edge of the vessel, for if he came to a point beyond his depth he was sure to be drowned. Thereupon I said to him, "You forget, my son, that diving deep into the Divine Sea you need not be afraid of death." Remember, the Divine Sea is the Sea of Immortality. The water of this Sea never causeth death, but is water of Everlasting Life. Be not afraid, like some foolish persons, that you may run to excess in your love of God. From this Sea of Immortality drink the nectar of Absolute Everlasting Knowledge and Joy. Yes, first see Him, realize Him in this way, then shall you hear His voice. He will talk to you, and, if He so wisheth, will entrust you with His commission.

Infinite is the number of ways leading to the Sea of Immortality. It is immaterial how you get into this Sea. Suppose there is a reservoir of nectar; it is open to you to walk slowly to the sloping bank from *any* point, reach the nectar, and drink. You become immortal in any case. Again, what does it signify if one throws oneself into the reservoir or is pushed into it by somebody? The result in either case is the same: you taste the nectar—the Water of Life; you become immortal. . . .

You have had enough of this world, enough of lectures, controversies, schisms and the rest, is it not so? Your soul must be wearied by now. It is high time to have one aim—to give your attention to God alone—to plunge, to dive deep, into the Immortal Sea of His Love.

A man is lift up from earthly things with two wings—they are simplicity and purity; simplicity ought to be in intention, purity in affection: simplicity intendeth God, purity taketh Him and tasteth Him. . . . A pure heart pierceth heaven and hell. . . . If there be any joy in this world, the man of pure heart hath it. . . .

Like as iron put in the fire loseth his rust and shall be made bright: so a man turning wholly to God is freed, and taken from sloth, and changed into a new man.

—*Thomas A'Kempis.*

DEDICATION

After five weeks of ceaseless activity at Ananda Ashrama, his California Peace Retreat, Swami Paramananda returned to Boston in time to direct the remodeling of the newly purchased home of the Vedanta Centre at 32 Fenway, every part of the work of reconstruction being carried on under his untiring personal supervision. Also from California came two of the Ashrama brothers to assist, so that much of the labor was a labor of love. The Swami arrived on Feb. 2nd, and on Feb. 23rd, the moving from the Beacon Street house took place, many faithful hands accomplishing what seemed the impossible. That was on a Saturday. The same afternoon, the Swami received a hundred or so members of The Friendly Tours Association, an organization formed for the purpose of breaking down the mental barriers which shut people away from varying phases of human thought and endeavor. Owing to the confusion incident to the moving, the Swami received these friends in the spacious room on the second floor, overlooking the wide spaces of the Fenway. Standing by the open fire, he outlined for them the spirit and purpose of the work, and gave answer to the questions which arose. As usual, he infused the meeting with his own spirit of love, tolerance and cheer.

The next morning, Sunday, Feb. 24th, many eyes opened wide with surprise on beholding the transformation that had been wrought in so short a time. The entire lower floor of the dignified Georgian mansion had been thrown into a chapel, more than seventy-five feet in length, impressive in its simple beauty. A good deal, it is true, remained to be finished; but the eye—caught by the great, glowing lotus symbol, hanging like a sun above the altar at the far end; by the altar itself with its profuse offering of fruit and flowers; and by the fragrant Shrine-room immediately adjoining—was conscious of no lack. A spirit of sanctity pervaded the eastern Temple of the Universal Spirit, even on this first day, and was palpably felt by the very large number who filled the chapel to overflowing at all three Services.

There was a varied musical program, voice, 'cello, flute and piano adding their quota of beauty. Special mention must be made of the Negro Spirituals, sung by a colored quartet with true understanding, and poignancy of feeling. Like the flowers and fruit, the music was the gift of friends and well-wishers.

At the morning Service, 11 A.M., the Swami struck, as always, the deep note of universality and true holiness.

In the afternoon, at 3:30, following a few words of his own in the way of introduction, he turned the platform over to the guest speaker, Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerji, who pleaded for a greater fusion of Eastern and Western ideals, illustrating the need for this with his own unique interpretation of an Upanishadic allegory.

At 8 P.M., The Swami brought the day to its close with a final Service, in which he was assisted by Charushila Devi of India, one of his two Indian workers in this country. This little lady is the living embodiment of the spirit of Indian womanhood—a spirit to which her words paid tribute. At the Ananda-Ashrama, on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birthday, a fund was started to be particularly applied to work with and for Indian women, and was placed in the charge of Gayatri Devi. On the evening of the Boston Dedication a similar fund was inaugurated, and was placed by the Swami in Charushila Devi's keeping. Its purpose is to facilitate, among other things, the closer drawing together of Eastern and Western womanhood, and therefore, it came as a fitting culmination to an occasion pregnant with wider understanding and truer tolerance.

REPORT

Naturally, during the early part of February, Swami Paramananda had little time to give to anything other than the new Temple, its preparation and dedication. There were, however, one or two exceptional events which claimed his attention. First, in significance, perhaps, was the opportunity to welcome to the Centre—still in its old home—one who holds the full love and trust of all India—Mr. C. F. Andrews, close and dear associate of Mahatma Gandhi and Doctor Tagore. His coming, just as the Centre was preparing to take a new step in the name of all that India holds sacred, seemed truly propitious. He was in Boston only from a Saturday to a Monday, but very generously gave the Swami several hours of his time on the afternoon of Sunday, Feb. 10th, coming with Mr. Richard Gregg, whose new book, "The Economics of Khaddar", has placed the stamp of practical approval on Mr. Gandhi's program. Those who know the radiant spirit of brotherhood emanating from Mr. Andrews, and Mr. Gregg's quiet earnestness, can understand how their visit was, for the Swami and his household, a refreshment and a blessing.

The other event was the occasion of an Address which the Swami gave, on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 17th, before the Caspy Club of the Boston Y.M.C.A. The membership—composed mostly of young people—turned out in full force to greet him, and gave him serious attention while he spoke to them on India, their questions, afterwards, drawing from the Swami sparks of real fire.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

During the Swami's sojourn in Boston, the Services and Classes at Ananda-Ashrama were conducted by Gayatri Devi. The new library, forming one end of the cloister of the Temple of the Universal Spirit, has filled a long-felt want, providing not only a quiet place for reading and reflection, but a meeting place for the more intimate and informal gatherings, such, for instance, as the Fireside Talk on Thursday evening. The fireside has indeed been popular in California this winter, for there have been few balmy days. At the Ashrama, where the altitude tends to frosty nights and mornings, there has been hail, and even snow. "But how quickly," writes one member, "does one day of California sunshine make you forget all this." After all, February saw the golden plumes of the acacia flung against the deep, deep blue of sky, its fragrance like honey on the wind. March and April will be redolent of orange blossoms and the sweet Spanish broom; while in the air, mocking birds, mad with the intoxication of the springtide, will sing as they fly, turning aerial somersaults in the pure bliss of being.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

A survey of the brief report of the Ramakrishna Mission, for the year 1928, shows much activity, including the opening of four schools at Makhanda for the spread of primary education in backward villages; new hospital wards for the Sevashramas at Allahabad and Brindaban; grants of land to the Home of Service in Benares, and to the Ashrama at Mysore; and the gift of nearly 20 bighas of land at Gouripur near Dum Dum Cant, with a contribution of the sum of Rs. 3,200 for its development as a vocational section of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home in Calcutta.

Lecture work has been very much to the fore both in India and abroad during the past year; while very important famine relief was started in Bankura and Balurghat, 2264 mds. of rice having been distributed to 6475 recipients belonging to 265 villages. Owing to the promise of good crops, however, these relief activities were stopped in November, and no further contributions are required for this particular purpose.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

April, 1929

Be Thou Healed

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall.*

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BE THOU HEALED

By Swami Paramananda

AT the present time, especially in this country, there is a great deal of interest in regard to healing; that is, physical healing, for the average man takes it only from that one angle. There is, however, another aspect even more important. Epictetus, the great Roman philosopher, once said to his disciples: "It is more necessary for the soul to be cured than the body, and it is better to die than to live unworthily." Naturally, when a person is ailing he looks for some miracle to restore his bodily health; nothing else seems to him so vital. Yet if his mind is unhealthy and unwholesome, if he has not the right point of view, and if he does not know how to breathe from the atmosphere that which makes for inner well-being, no amount of miracle can restore him.

There is a little incident I have always cherished, which took place many years ago—as much as six hundred years ago—when Lord Gouranga, one of the great Hindu saints, was travelling through Southern India. He was going on pilgrimage to Jagernauth, the temple which is known to many of you through your reading. Now there was a sick man there, a leper, who had heard of him, and, being a holy character, he longed to see and worship him. So he went to the temple, but upon his arrival he found that the saint had already departed. In anguish he ran after him, crying, "O Lord, why hast thou forsaken me?" and so great was the agony in his soul that he swooned. Lord Gouranga had already gone a considerable distance. Suddenly he stopped as if some one had called him, and turning, ran back toward the temple. Coming upon the poor leper, he stooped and lifted him in his arms, and at once he was healed. That, however, is not the point of the story. When this man suddenly realized that he was no longer an unclean object, that he was made whole, instead of it pleasing him, he burst into tears. "O Lord," he said, "what hast thou done? I did not come to be healed; I came to worship thee. My sickness taught me humility of spirit; it softened me; it cured me of many, many ills in the way of selfishness and wrong desire; but now, if I am once more made well physically, I feel I may again turn away from my spiritual goal."

This may seem a difficult point of view for us to attain. The Occidental mind runs to what it calls the practical. We can appreciate it if some one gives us health and a sound body, but we fail to see that in gaining our desired end we may be hurt in another way. I want you to get the gist of it. The wonder lay not in the saint's gift and his power to make the leper whole, but in the man's reaction: "I did not come for this; I came to be cured spiritually, so that no more temptations might arise within me, no more agitations take place because of my uncontrolled nature."

If we analyze philosophically or otherwise, we find that the real cause of sickness lies not so much in the body as in something deeper. We imagine that a person who has good health ought to have a good healthy mind and a wholesome nature, and that he ought to be happy, but seldom do we find this combination. A man may have animal strength and vigor and yet—if he be not generous, unselfish, kind and charitable—lack true wholesomeness. What shall it profit him to have bodily health and prosperity if his soul is sick? On the contrary, he may become a menace to himself and others. Such people are often dangerous elements in human society. Having a great deal of strength physically, and even mentally, but an unwholesome mind, they become a very detrimental influence. How many people consider what Epictetus told his disciples, that it is more important for the soul to be healed than the body? There is an example of this in the life of the Lord Buddha. Once there came to him a man accompanied by servants—very rich and pompous. Now in India when we go to see a holy person, we bow down as an act of humility, but this man was not able to do so; he was too fat, and perhaps he had a fat mind as well. So he confessed, "I am ill, and, as you see, cannot do the things that other people do; for that reason I have come to you." Lord Buddha, like Christ, had the reputation of being able to heal the sick; therefore this man expected at once to receive some miraculous help. But, to his utter astonishment, this great teacher did not lay his hand upon him, or perform any miracle; he began to talk to him. He said, "Do you want to know the cause of your suffering?" The man assented. "You are not normal in your habits; you eat too much; you are indulgent with yourself; you live in luxury, and no one can be healthy living in this way. Get rid of your servants; begin to walk instead of being carried; take exercise; cut down your diet." The man, beyond question, was irritated. He had come to this wonderful saint only to be disappointed. But he went home and thought these things over. He was desirous of being healed, and it was his good fortune that his desire seriously inclined him to make a little exertion toward following the Lord

Buddha's advice. So he reduced his diet, and began to exercise a little bit. Soon he felt a disinclination for the things that formerly he had depended upon, and there was a quickening within his soul. After a time he went again to see the Lord Buddha, and, having paid him reverence, said, "Before when I came to you it was to be healed physically, but now I come to be healed spiritually."

Moral healing is what we should pray for first, even before bodily health; and I believe many of us would do so, if we understood. Bodily health would follow. If a man is not constantly aware of the things that make him conscious of the body, the concerns of the body, and the weight of the flesh, he will naturally be lifted up. This is not only logical; it is practical and it is true. The less a person thinks of his body, the more is he on the road to healthfulness. You cannot be healthy if you are constantly concerned about your health. We need to create another atmosphere altogether; we are too absorbed in the material. You may think that is the only way to become successful. Some of you perhaps are successful. Nevertheless, Truth always remains true. How long does success endure in this material world; and what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? That is the eternal challenge.

Which is more important: merely to be restless for physical health, or to be established spiritually? "Be thou healed" —what does it imply? That we are really healed within; that there is not a ripple of selfishness, no fever of envy, jealousy, anger or hatred in our mind. If these are prevalent, any outer remedy is like taking a narcotic. For the time being we may have a little relief; just as a person who cannot sleep will quiet down if you give him a sleeping potion. But this is not curing him. The real cure is to remove the detrimental conditions within. And what follows? At once stillness; a sense of peace. You do not have to wait till you are dead and gone to enjoy these blessings, you can create now, this moment, an atmosphere of sanctity and rest which others will feel; and that is what I call healthfulness. It may seem like a dream, that we can ever attain to this; but it is possible. There are in the world those who seem to impart healthfulness and wholesomeness of mind and body. When we come in contact with them we feel a stimulus; we think, live, and aspire after something that is uplifting and abiding; even our bodily life is enhanced.

It is a good practice for us to feel that we are not the body. You may say, "When I have a headache or any kind of bodily discomfort, how can I deny it? Would it be right for me to do so?" It would not be right to say, "No, it does not touch me," so long as you are constantly thinking about it; but it is perfectly right for you to transcend your bodily consciousness. You can, however, do that only when you have something higher to which you can cling. For instance, you cannot take your feet off the ground unless you have some support to hold to. Same way it is with our inner life. Not through theory can we overcome our ills, but only as we find something of practical value by means of which we can rise above the ailments of the physical. Then comes another state of consciousness altogether. Then are we made whole.

"The body has in itself a certain power of curing itself, and many things can rouse this curative power into action, such as mental conditions, or medicine, or exercise. As long as we are disturbed by physical conditions, so long we need the help of physical agencies. Not until we have got rid of bondage to the nerves can we disregard them." Here, in these words of Swami Vivekananda, is indicated a practice we can all begin to apply to our own daily life. There are some people who feel that they have no nerves—their nerves are of steel, invulnerable—while there are others who are constantly jumping and restless. We can, however, withdraw our mind to such an extent that we no longer recognize the bondage of the body. If even for an instant we can do this, we can rise above great bodily afflictions. For instance, in the case of very severe illness, if through right understanding and the application of philosophy you can withdraw your mind altogether from it, you can cure yourself. I have seen this happen many, many times; but never through theory; you have actually to detach yourself. This proves that the avenue for illness—whatever may be the apparent reason—is the mind. Mind can kill a person—often it does—mind can enlarge and distort. Control of mind is something we should all practise in our daily life. Instead of magnifying our troubles, we must try to minimize them.

The more we become engrossed by the physical, the more are we disturbed by passing conditions—every little thing unsettles our mind. For this reason, the first principle in meditation is for a man to forget that he has a body, or, if he cannot altogether forget—since to be conscious of it is a long standing habit—then to think of the body plus something higher. Body is not all in all. Body-habit may have become for us second nature; but habit can be counteracted. Those wonderful sayings in the Vedic revelation: "I am not the body; I am that Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute," do they not give a stirring to the individual life, helping it to break this clinging to finite conditions; and is this aid not far more important than any momentary material relief?

We have a saying in India: "You can give food to the hungry; you can give clothing to one who is in rags; you can save a person from death, or you can infuse wisdom into his soul." The last is the greatest help that you can give. Hunger will return; need can be only temporarily relieved; and the man whose life you have saved may turn out to be a rogue, a thief, or a murderer; he may say to himself: "Why did he save me? I am not happy now." But when we quicken a man's higher nature—his spiritual entity—we give him that by means of which he can stand on his own feet, and conduct himself through all the passages of life safely, and with sane consciousness. So I think when wise men pray for us, they pray that we may be healed from within, that our fever of anguish may be quenched. Some people always have this fever, no matter what the circumstance may be, or whatever may be the occasion. They are full of suspicion, doubt, anxiety; they know no wholesomeness, no peace; they cannot even enjoy their food, or the blessings that come to them. A miser, for instance, who hoards his wealth, what good does he get out of it? He is weighted down with thoughts of worry; his mind is diseased. These are facts, not fancies. A diseased mind no amount of outer medicine can cure; yet it is the thing we need to be cured of most. Therefore, when a spiritual person blesses us, or when we pray to the Lord, let us pray that we be healed inwardly from the disease of despondency, from the disease of suspicion, from the disease of negation and doubt—doubt, not only of the Lord and of humanity, but doubt of self. These things come to us in many ways, and spoil our life. When we received life we received it abundantly. The Bestower of great beneficence gave us life. He did not set any boundaries—man shall take only this much and no more—He gave us a supply from that great Reservoir, that Infinite which is behind us and before us, above us and below us. Why, then, is it that we feel we are so poor?

What causes this sense of limitation? Self-limitation we call it; and we create it. We seem to measure life up, and say, "Here is my portion, and this is thy portion, and that is his portion." We must get rid of these ideas; we must cleanse ourselves by opening this avenue from within.

Christ used the expression, "Be thou clean"—clean of mind, clean of heart, clean of body. We cannot be clean one way without being cleansed altogether. We cannot have a clean body unless we have a clean mind and a clean heart; and this means that we have to go deep down within our self. Same way it is with illness. What shall it profit us if we have just a physical cure? The sickness may come back again; the cause may remain. Today, for this reason, even medical science, instead of merely trying to relieve a person from his pain, seeks to go to the very root, to the cause of the disease. But when we find this cause physically and scientifically we shall also find it spiritually. Spiritual knowledge and scientific knowledge will blend; because, in the final analysis, they are one. Both lead to the self-same goal. There is no difference between the province of the world and the province of religion. It is only the eye of ignorance which beholds difference.

When our vision is unfolded, then we see the necessity for everything; even a sting of pain or disappointment we take as a blessing. A great man glorifies his pain and adversity; while a foolish man, a weak man, a man of ignorance, succumbs to them. We find him cursing his destiny, rebellious because he is called upon to endure such things. A wise man, on the other hand, learns something from every event. He is not proud. When pain, sickness, or humiliation is his portion, he actually smiles a heavenly smile, because he feels a great blessing has come to him in these forms. What does it prove? That we only take according to the measure of our inner capacity. If our mental mirror is cleansed and purified, whatever image is thrown there shines out clean cut; but if it is obscured by dust, it will create distorted pictures. That is why Christ said: "Be thou clean." It is not that we should neglect our physical health. No. These things should not be taken too literally. In India, there is a saying that a man in this venture toward the highest goal should take good care of his physical body; because it is his vehicle, the best instrument he has to work with. Let it be an obedient servant—a friend. That life is truly well blended where we find physical force, mental agencies, and spiritual powers all blended; where the body does not rebel against the spiritual instinct, and the spiritual instinct does not disregard the bodily welfare, but all work as one.

When we feel a spiritual impulse, we also sometimes feel a great physical exuberance. It must be that way. A thought of inspiration rises within us, almost lifting us on wings; we do not touch the ground; we seem to float, such lightness of spirit do we feel. At times like these our body becomes a great vehicle for action. Let us heal the soul; the body will take care of itself. Let a man seek first what comes first. Let him be united with his inner Spirit. Are we not told in clear, definite, and direct language that the soul is immortal? The Christian Bible, the Greek philosophy, the Vedic revelations, and all the great Classics have declared it. But what avail, if we do not know the nature of our true being? A man may have inherited vast wealth—millions—but if he has no conscious control of it, he may die of starvation. That is exactly our situation. We must know; and this knowing means something more than book knowledge. It means something other than going from place to place restlessly seeking. It means going deep down within our soul. It means finding a sense of union with God or Truth—whatever name we call It—and to find that is to be healed.

"I was poor; I was wretched; I was miserable; I was complaining—full of doubt and despondency—but suddenly I am renewed; I am changed; my mind is full of gladness; my past wretchedness and pain are forgot; I am plunged into ineffable peace." Do you believe such a transformation is possible? I do. You would like to have such a realization come to you in your hour of grief. But it will not come so long as you cling to the changing and the perishable. Whenever you feel helpless; whenever you feel thwarted; whenever you feel that the world has treated you badly, do not brood over this condition, or go into the world to fight against it. Come out of it, and breathe fresh air; breathe in that which will give you strength, then, even if you have to go back into the struggle, you go refreshed—made over. Think how much of our misery could be eliminated if we would follow that process.

Your Bible, and every one's Bible, tells us that we should look to God, to the Truth, for our spiritual refreshment; yet there are many who altogether turn a deaf ear to that, and cry: "We are so miserable; who is going to heal us? Who is going to save us?" There is no one who can save us until we can apply the saving grace within. We already possess it, this saving grace. As you have read, the body has in itself certain curative power. Thought can lift us right up and make us forget our ills. We have all experienced this. As a practical example: you wake up in the morning with a headache, feeling miserable; suddenly something absorbs you, you grow interested, you altogether forget that you have or had a headache. When you are asked: "How is your headache now?" you are inclined to reply: "I was not conscious of it." As soon, however, as your mind is turned to it, you again become aware of it. What happened in the meantime? In the same way do we banish these thoughts which throw upon us their weight of sorrow, and burden of unhealthfulness.

The Lord has not created two worlds for us to live in. He has given us the entire universe to draw from; and the man who is resourceful, he draws from everything, from birds and beasts, from flowers and blades of grass. The human beings whom he contacts, he draws from them, and often draws evil. But it was not ordained that we should draw evil from anything. As we study these matters, and face them sincerely, we realize more and more the province of the soul. Our strength lies not in the outer. We build great castles for our protection and think them impenetrable, but it is not what man is able to create with his hands that is going to protect him and make for his security. That which is impenetrable is within. The more we can turn to that, the more our soul nature will grow in magnitude and spiritual immensity. "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free! . . . Be perfect as your Father which is in heaven." These suggestions are given to us so that we may not get away from this fundamental fact. That was why in India the parrots were taught holy texts, so that man, even in his playful hours, might hear them singing the song of the soul: "The soul knows no disease, no death, and the body is only its garment." But what if the garment should be torn? Then man can certainly earn for himself another, because soul is omnipotent.

Never can we overcome evil by dwelling on evil. Never can we overcome the ills of the body by thinking of the body, but rather by transcending it, and finding our home in our spiritual entity. As we do that, the body becomes like a trained instrument in our hand—flexible, obedient—our senses, our mind, our intellect, all of them yielding, and thus aiding us in our spiritual venture. This body is given to us for our use; yet if we take it as all in all, suffer with it, grieve through it, and be bound by it, then our purpose is lost. Let us, therefore, pray that we may be healed from within of our doubt of God, our doubt of self, our doubt of humanity, that it may be altogether removed from us, that we may have a calm and poised spirit radiating tranquillity, and that we may breathe an atmosphere which is full of healing. Breath is called life—*prana;* but whether or not it brings us life, depends on our breathing. Ordinary air cannot save one. We must breathe by that inner breath, which is the very life force. In that way we fill ourselves with health. Some people by taking a breath are revived and renewed. When you are tired, when you are exhausted, when you feel defeated, if you can take such a breath, you too will be refreshed; the burdens will altogether drop from your shoulders, and you will say with the mystic: "I am suddenly made new, all my past wretchedness is gone!" This type of healing interests me far more than any other. If you have need of bodily healing, pray for it; but do not forget to ask for this fundamental cure, and, when you have received it, pray that you may retain it, and that your life may shine so as to glorify your Maker, causing others to feel that there is light, and this world is not in darkness.

We follow the splendour of God on toward the source from which it flows, and there we feel that our spirits are stripped of all things and bathed . . . . in the pure and infinite ocean of love. This immersion in love becomes the habit of our being, and so takes place while we sleep and while we wake. . . . It is simply an eternal going forth out of ourselves into a transformed state. —*Ruysbroek*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

It is the mind that makes a man, and our vigor is in our immortal soul. *—Ovid*

Furthermore, O Lord, heal the diseases of our souls, cure our bodily weaknesses, O Physician of souls and bodies, Overseer of all flesh, oversee and heal us by Thy salvation. *—Liturgy of St. Mark*

Man is only in a true state of health or salvation when he knows that all his being and knowledge are derived from and dependent upon One who is. . . greater than himself. *—Anonymous*

The Infinite indeed is below, above, behind, before, right and left—it is indeed all this. . . . He who sees this, does not see death, nor illness, nor pain; he who sees this, sees everything, and obtains everything everywhere. *—Chandogya Upanishad*

One of the greatest trials and miseries of this life seems to me to be the absence of a grand spirit to keep the body under control; illnesses and grievous afflictions, though they are a trial, I think nothing of if the soul is strong, for it praises God, and sees that everything comes from His hand. *—Santa Teresa*

O Goddess of men, Goddess of women, Thou whose counsel none may learn, where thy glance falleth, the dead live, the sick are healed, the sore made whole, seeing Thy face. *—Babylonian Prayer to Ishtar*

A cheerful heart causeth good healing, But a broken spirit drieth up the bones. *—Proverbs*

Let us live happily then, free from ailments among the ailing! Among men who are ailing let us dwell free from ailments. *—Dhammapada*

TRANSMUTATION

By Lola A. Haynes

I had a dream which does not seem a dream,
For ever it abides within my heart
Sentient and warm—a vivid, living thing.

Fresh fruit I laid upon the altar of the Lord—
Flashing like jewels in a silver urn—
Cool grapes like drops of jade,
The purple plum,
Pomegranates ruddy as the sunset glow;
And, as I knelt, a flame burned in my heart,
Renunciatory, holy, lambent, pure.
It swept all dross before it and consumed
The blinding veils which shut me from clear sight;
And lo! There dawned a light, so radiant,
It flooded all my being with its might.
My eyes flashed open wide,
And slow before their wondering gaze
The shining urn was borne aloft
By hands invisible;
And as I watched, the fruit slow changed to flowers
All purely white like frost, and glistening
Refulgent in the wondrous light which streamed
From out their hearts of gold.
The room was filled with mellow radiance
Which like a living heart around me, pulsed and beat
Until I prostrate lay in rapture so divine,
It seemed that it must part the chrysalis
And let my Spirit soar.

My senses tell me I have dreamed a dream,
But O my glad Soul whispers, it was more!

NAMES OF POWER

From the Avesta of Zarathushtra

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: O Omniscient Lord, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, Thou Holy One! What of the Holy Word is the strongest? What is the most glorious and victorious. . . ?

Ahura Mazda answered: Our name, O Spitama Zarathushtra! That is the strongest part of the Holy Word; that is the most glorious and victorious; that is the most effective.

Then Zarathushtra said: Reveal unto me that name of thine, O Omniscient Lord!

Ahura Mazda answered unto him: My name is I AM, O Holy Zarathushtra! My name is Perfect Holiness, Understanding, Knowledge. My name is He Who Produceth Weal, the Unconquerable One, He Who Maketh the True Account, the All-Seeing, the Healing One.

Worship me, O Zarathushtra, by day and by night, with offerings of libations well accepted. I will come unto thee for help and joy, I, Ahura Mazda.

I am the Keeper; I am the Creator and Maintainer; I am the Discerner; I am the most beneficent Spirit.

My name is the Bestower of Health. My name is the Glorious, the Most Glorious. My name is the Word of Prosperity, the King Who Ruleth at His Will.

These are My names.

And he who in this material world, O Spitama Zarathushtra, shall recite and pronounce these names of Mine either by day or by night; when he riseth up or when he layeth him down; when he layeth him down or when he riseth up;

That man, neither in that day nor night, shall be wounded by the weapons of the foe; not the knife, nor the cross-bow, not the arrow, nor the sword, nor the sling-stone shall reach and wound him.

But those names shall come in to keep him from before and behind from the evil-doer bent on mischief, and from that fiend who is all death, Angra Mainyu. It will be as if there were a thousand men watching over one.

THE HAND OF THE MOTHER

By Sister Daya

What is there in woodland and field, bird-song and brook-song, to bring healing to soul and body? Modern science will reply: We know nothing of the soul; but as for the body, it is the quiet of the countryside, the pure air, the curative rays in the sunlight, the freedom from the rush and hurry of city life. Yes, of course. And yet—and yet—as we have lain on the warm earth in summer, looking at the sky through a rainbow maze of wild flowers; as we have smelt the indescribable sweet odor of the soil, commingled with the breath of countless growing things; as we have listened to the murmurings of the Silence, have we not been conscious of something other than chemical reaction? While the oxygen was purifying our blood stream, was not the touch of wind upon hair and cheek doing even more for our souls; and was not the sunshine bringing us other than a laboratory change?

My mind goes back to an experience of my own some years ago, in a little Californian valley, whose walls seemed to shut out the world, and to shut in peace. I had gone there for health's sake, and, desiring to take full advantage of all the valley had to offer, I slept every night on the flat roof which covered the end of the patio. From there I could see the encircling hills, the tall Eucalyptus trees, darkly bending, and could gaze into the amazing depths of the star-filled sky. No doubt this sleeping out-of-doors played a great part in my ultimate recovery; but never shall I forget that glimpse, as I closed my eyes—that final glimpse—into the unfathomable spaces of the universe. It freed something within me, and my body responded.

Swami Paramananda once called Nature "an undiluted part of God." Simple, surrendered, unselfconscious, it conveys to the torn and tormented mind and body a reflection of its own wholeness. Though a man may be altogether of the earth, or—more truly said—of the world; though he may be utterly incapable of mystical interpretation or poetic thought; though for him trees are but wood and streams but water, yet even he will take on some of the qualities of Nature as he lives in her midst. Gradually he will cease to be the harried, hurried, hunted creature that he was. For environment sooner or later puts its stamp on a man.

In the wild stretches where a billion blades of grass sway to a single breeze; where birds, moved in their flight by a common impulse, silently trace their graceful figures in the sky; where all seems but the expression, varied and beautiful, of One Great Life, in such an atmosphere man too begins to find his place in the Vast and Unbounded. It is because the implications of Nature are those of the Spirit that in lands such as India, the forest life has been treasured from time immemorial as the life best suited for the realization of God. He is everywhere—that is true—but our eyes are veiled in some places more than in others. Just as over the city, we see a physical pall of smoke, so also is there a pall of selfishness, a pall of hate and fear, a pall of ignorance—smoke arising from a common thought of separateness and struggle. Of course the real veil is within and not outside a man; but the outer veil has its effect. For, after all, inner and outer are one, and thus, in this world of division, react upon each other.

Then there is the Silence. All true books on spiritual healing emphasize the need of silence. Materia Medica likewise recognizes its value, especially in certain cases. Tired business men are advised to take time off and get away from the clamor of the city; convalescents and nerve patients seek, by the doctor's orders, the sea, the forest, or the mountains. "Quiet—quiet," is the command. But what can give us quiet when the mind is running like a mill race; when we are being pinched and pushed by the imps of thought? Under these conditions, that alone can bring quiet which has the power to lift us into the clear consciousness of unwearied Spirit. Nature by herself cannot do this. She can only supplement a man's own effort. She can suggest, invite, subtly remould. The response lies with the individual. There are souls to whom she is the open door for sudden ecstasy, as was the case with Richard Jeffries, whose words are quoted by William James in his talks on "Psychology and Life's Ideals:"

"I was utterly alone with the sun and the earth. Lying down on the grass, I spoke in my soul to the earth, the sun, the air, and the distant sea, far beyond sight. . . . With all the intensity of feeling which exalted me, all the intense communion I held with the earth, the sun and sky, the stars hidden by the light, with the ocean—in no manner can the thrilling depth of these feelings be written—with these I prayed as if they were the keys of an instrument. . . . The great sun, burning with light, the strong earth—dear earth—the warm sky, the pure air, the thought of ocean, the inexpressible beauty of all filled me with a rapture, an ecstasy, an inflatus. With this inflatus, too, I prayed. . . . The prayer, this soul-emotion, was in itself not for an object: it was a passion . I hid my face in the grass. I was wholly prostrated; I lost myself in the wrestle; I was rapt and carried away. . . . Had any shepherd accidentally seen me lying on the turf, he would only have thought I was resting a few minutes. I made no outward show. Who could have imagined the whirlwind of passion that was going on in me as I reclined there!"

The reactions of men are different. Although the average human being may not be able to respond with such intensity to the stimulus of Nature, yet, under the cosmic blue, he will be aware of an inward soothing, of bigness and sweetness, and a letting go of care. And can this fail to have a beneficent effect upon the body, as the quiet in Nature takes possession of the soul.

You may wonder, "Is Nature quiet? In the country, is there not an unbroken sound swelling into loud choruses of locust and grasshopper, frog and cricket; not to mention the ceaseless night call of whippoorwill and owl?" But the sound of Nature floats on a sea of silence, while the noises of the city obliterate the very memory of it. Country sounds draw the mind into its own inner depths; the roar of the city engulfs it in chaos and confusion. The secret of Nature's healing, however, lies in its mystical suggestion. It bears to the inner ears of man constant rumours of his own infinite being, thereby untying the knots with which the little self has bound his heart. It frees his consciousness to a greater or less extent; and if he has the power to hold to that freedom, the bondage of the body likewise may be broken. For in time body must follow where mind and Spirit lead. The trouble is, we forget this element of time, and often destroy by impatience what the Silence has been building.

He, then, who would drink healing from the cup of Nature, let him enter into her inner life. Let him not be afraid to be a poet and a dreamer. Let him be rhythmic and simple, straight and strong as the tree; humble as the blade of grass; full of faith like the flower. Let him not think: "Myself, and Nature," but, "One Self, One Divine Life through all." Listen to what the poet Tagore has to tell us:

"The man whose acquaintance with the world does not lead him deeper than science leads him, will never understand what it is that the man with the spiritual vision finds in these natural phenomena. The water does not merely cleanse his limbs, but it purifies his heart; for it touches his soul. The earth does not merely hold his body, but it gladdens his mind; for its contact is more than a physical contact—it is a living presence. When a man does not realize his kinship with the world, he lives in a prison-house whose walls are alien to him. When he meets the eternal spirit in all objects, then is he emancipated, for then he discovers the fullest significance of the world into which he is born; then he finds himself in perfect truth, and his harmony with the all is established."

Think if the world at large could recognize man's need for this outer and inner contact with the Real—with Life Itself! Think if a man could realize his own need of it, and would take steps to satisfy that need, as he now takes steps to satisfy his craving for food and drink! His life would be reorganized, and he would be reborn. If we can but learn to pass beyond the shimmering veils of verdant beauty, the glowing veils of jeweled splendor, or those soft as the grey mist at dawn, which hide the face of the Infinite Mother, we may find ourselves gazing into the unfathomable spaces of Her eyes; we may feel the tender touch of Her hand, smoothing all the scars of selfhood from our hearts, all the wounds of sickness from our bodies; and know a peace which no outer circumstance can rob us of, or mar.

THE QUEST FOR GOD*

An Early Mohammedan Treatise of Mystical Devotion

By Prof. Reynold A. Nicholson

It would be difficult to name another book that gives us in so few pages so much of the spirit and atmosphere of mystical devotion in Islam.

Chapter 1., 'Concerning the Quest of God and the Precipices which are encountered on the way,' begins as follows:

Said Abu'l-Qasim the gnostic: O ye companies of people in quest of God, know that when the worshipper betakes himself to God and seeks union with Him with a fluttering heart and a sincere purpose to abide with Him unto everlasting, he is confronted by a thousand precipices of fire, every precipice being harder to pass and a thousand thousand times longer than the distance from the highest heaven to the earth; and he ceases not to encounter precipice after precipice, ever crossing them one after another, till he reaches Him whom he seeks and loves. Now the first of those precipices that confront him is the precipice of the World, with all that is therein of her gauds and good-living and enjoyment of her various delights and pleasures. 'Where art thou going,' says she, 'O servant of God? I am thy dwelling place and thy shelter. Thou wert created from me and thou wert born in me and thou hast lived by means of me. Thou canst not do without me.' But when the worshipper regards her hidden banes and her consummate witchery and the variety of her deceit and guile and the abundance of her evil and affliction and the fleetness with which she passes away and how inconsistent she is to her people, and since he sees his fleshly soul inclining towards her pleasures and lusts and towards friendliness with her inhabitants, he will rely upon God for help and will renounce her and not busy himself with her or attend to her, and paying reverence to the holiness of his Lord he will say to her: 'O shelter of every affliction and bane, verily that which I cannot do without is the great and glorious God, and He is able to relieve me from want of thee.'

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*From the "Visva-Bharati Quarterly," with acknowledgements to "The Quest."

This paragraph is followed by four of like form and structure, describing the other precipices, namely, Mankind, the Carnal Soul, Paradise and Miracles. Of Paradise, which was created by the will of God, exists for His sake and only serves to distract His creatures from the real Object of worship, the author says:

And therewithal the worshipper attaineth not to Paradise but after a long time; for he attaineth not unto it till he leave behind him death and the grave and the Resurrection; but unto God he may attain at every moment and twinkling of an eye, nay, less than that. God hath said, 'And bow in prayer and draw nigh.'

"As for miracles and spiritual graces and endowments, however exalted they may be, the true worshipper will close his eyes to them, turning from the gift to the Giver." This principle is developed in Chapter 11., which explains 'How those in quest of God ought to refrain from tarrying in any Stage or Station of the Mystic Way.' The stages enumerated are Conversion (*inabat*), Repentance (*taubat*), Devotion (*ibadat*), Fear and Dread (*khaut wa-khashyat*), Love and Longing (*mahabbat wa-shauq*), Nighness (*qurb*), Contemplation (*mushahadat*). Here is a typical passage:

When the worshipper seeks after God with a true will—the flame of longing having been kindled in him—and God knoweth the true will in his heart, He will seat him upon the steed of Conversion unto Him; then He will cause him to see the perfection of His clemency and compassion in bestowing His gracious lovingkindness and beneficence and His goodly bounty and munificence; and thereupon the worshipper will perceive how long he hath been forgetful and hath failed to perform his obligations toward God and how often he hath turned aside from Him; and because of his exceeding great shame he will be amazed and dumbfounded and will set out to journey away entirely from all vanities and errors toward God the Almighty and Glorious, and his fleshly soul will be overcome by his consciousness of God's beholding him; and then this worshipper will stand up with the feet of shame and fear upon the carpet of Repentance. And when he is fortified in the station of Repentance, and his heart is well-nigh tarrying therein unto death and is content therewith and resting in it and pleased with God's gift, then the voice of God comes into his inmost heart and saith: 'O My servant, My servant, what ails thee that thou tarriest and art content without Me and inclining towards other than Me, when I am He in whom abide the hopes of every one that hath hope? O My servant, come unto Me, come unto Me! Do not strive against Me for the like of that!' Then there will be kindled from his inmost heart the fire of longing after union with Him, and the heart will fly towards His voice on the wings of aspiration, seeking Him with a true will. And when God knoweth the true will in his heart, He will seat him upon the steed of Devotion.

The third and fourth chapters explain how God is ever calling to the hearts of those who seek Him, and how they hearken to Him and answer His call. That is to say, the prayer and praise of mystics is the response, the echo, which accompanies and attests the voice of God calling them to Himself and chiding them when their hearts turn away from Him; in reality their aspiration is His inspiration. The author himself does not formulate any doctrine of this kind, but, according to his custom, merely says that such and such things occur, and then proceeds to illustrate them; it is noteworthy that all his traditional examples of the Divine Call are drawn from Jewish or Christian sources. I may quote part of a Revelation addressed to Yahya ibn Zakariyya (John the Baptist):

Oh Yahya, verily I have laid upon Myself the ordinance that none of My servants should love Me, and I know the love in his heart, but I shall be his hearing and his sight and his tongue, and shall make hateful to him everything except Me and take off from him the burden of the lusts and pleasures of this world, and regard him every day seventy thousand times, and at every moment increase unto him the delights of My love and the sweetness of My society, and make strong upon him the longing after Me, and fill his heart with light from Me, so that he shall behold incessantly the subtleties of My working and the perfection of My loving; and I will stroke his head and lay My hand upon his pain, to the end that he may not complain of Me to other than Me, whilst I hear the throbbing of his heart from the longing which he hath to meet Me face to face. Then said Yahya son of Zakariyya. 'Tis behoving me that my heart rest not till I attain unto Thee.'

The fourth chapter includes, in addition to the general response of the seekers, a number of short responses said to have been made by the Prophet and certain Sufis, one of whom is a woman, the saintly Rabia of Basra.

The subject of the fifth and sixth chapters is the inward purification and discipline necessary for the seekers of God. Any one who goes on the quest without having first corrected his faults, is like the man who fell into a cesspool and was befouled from head to foot and came to a druggist and said:

"I want perfume to perfume myself withal." "Here is the perfume," said the druggist, "but where is the place for it? Every part of you is covered with filth." "What must I do then?" he asked. "Go," said the druggist, "and buy potash and fuller's earth and soap, and enter the bath and wash yourself and your clothes; then come to me that I may perfume you with my sweet scents."

As regards the author's psychology, it is based on a threefold division, namely: the carnal soul (*nafs*), the spirit (*ruh*)—which he identifies with the reason as opposed to the flesh—and the heart (*qalb*). "The carnal soul is appetitive, vile, and ignoble, and moves in the realm of mortality (*fana*); the spirit is spiritual, holy, and enlightened and moves in the realm of permanence (*baqa*); the heart is lordly, transcendent, and eternal, and moves in the realm of presence and vision (*liqa*)." Therefore the carnal soul desires this world, and the spirit desires the world to come, and the heart desires the Lord. When the carnal soul prevails, the spirit is compelled to follow and the seeker becomes worldly; when the spirit prevails, the carnal soul is compelled to follow and the seeker becomes a devout servant of God; when the heart prevails, the carnal soul and the spirit are compelled to follow and the seeker becomes one of God's elect.

The seventh chapter has a special interest, not only because it gives the date after which the Quest for God was composed, but also because here the author relates his own experience as a seeker:

Said Abu'l-Qasim the gnostic: O ye companies of people in quest of God, know that when I purposed to go in quest of God and formed the intention of approaching Him and making friends with Him unto everlasting, I reflected concerning these matters and I saw that of all matters they are the most noble and sublime. Then I pondered what preparation it behoved me to make in order that I might become fit for the attainment of the proposed end, and I saw that it consisted in becoming truly alone with Him and in abandoning every self-interest, first as regards this world, then as regards the next world, then as regards the Lord, so that I should come alone to the Alone. Then I considered that the Prophet—God bless and save him!—notwithstanding his perfect intelligence and profound knowledge and complete renunciation, had need to take counsel in all affairs temporal and spiritual, and that in this affair of mine it would be more seemly for me to consult with those who would aid me therein; and I knew that the greater the object the fewer the helpers for it and the fewer they that are fit to help. So then I caused the Carnal Soul and Desire together with all their assistants to sit on my left hand; and I caused the Spirit and the Reason to sit on my right hand together with all their assistants; and I caused the Heart together with all its assistants to sit in front of me; and I said to them: 'What say ye of the great and glorious God?' They answered, all of them: 'He is our Lord and the Lord of everything. Happy are they that know Him and seek Him and attain unto Him and are content with Him instead of all besides.' Then I asked them: 'What say ye if I go in quest of Him?' They answered, all of them: 'And is aught but this behoving thee? Hath He created thee except for this? Hath He commanded thee to do aught but this? Well done, well done, if God shall prosper thee!' I said: 'If ye be asked about this a thousand years, have ye any answer different from this?' They said: 'No.'

Then I faced towards the Carnal Soul and Desire and all their assistants and said: 'Now, if I go in quest of my Lord, will ye aid me to the end that I may take Him as a companion, friend, and beloved?' They answered: 'No.' 'Why is that?' I asked, 'since He is our Master and Our Lord, whom we cannot do without either here or hereafter?' 'Because,' said they, 'God hath created us of the darkness of this world and we have need of its lusts and pleasures and delights, and through it we are preserved, and through losing it we are lost.' I said: 'Woe to you! Do not ye see how the world is fleeting and passing away? Do not ye reflect concerning that which God hath promised and threatened and commanded and forbidden, and how He hath called you unto Himself and warned you against occupying yourselves with the world?' They answered: 'O worshipper in quest of thy Lord and Beloved, do not engage in long disputation, else thou wilt remain deprived of the Object of thy quest and search and love; and thou wilt find no friend and beloved other than Him. The matter is too urgent for thee to busy thyself with disputation.'

Then I faced towards the Spirit and the Reason with all their assistants and said: 'Look ye, if I go in quest of my Lord on the terms that I shall serve Him for the sake of His love, not for the sake of His Paradise, and that I shall commemorate Him as a means of drawing nigh unto Him, not for the sake of His recompense—will ye twain aid me therein and consent with me thereto?' They said: 'No.' 'Wherefore,' I asked, 'will not ye aid me to obtain that?' 'Because,' said they, 'God hath created us of the world to come and hath made us to have need of the lawful indulgences of Paradise; through it we are preserved, and through losing it we are lost, and we cannot do without it.' I said: 'Woe to you! Do not ye see that preoccupation with felicity debars the worshipper from Him who bestows felicity?' They answered me, saying: 'O worshipper in quest of thy Lord and thy Beloved, do not engage in long disputation, else thou wilt remain deprived of the Object of thy quest, and thou wilt not find any friend and beloved excepting Him. The matter is too urgent for thee to busy thyself with disputation.'

Then I faced towards the Heart and said: 'O Heart, thou art the monarch of the body, and thou art the abode of intuition and insight and the seat of vision on the part of the King who is our Judge; and God hath magnified thy estate and illumined thy evidence and exalted thy sovereignty. Verily, if thou art sound, all the members are sound; and if thou art corrupt, all the members are corrupt. And know that God hath called me unto Himself and commanded me to turn towards Him; so then, if I go in quest of my Lord with the resolution to abide with Him unto everlasting, wilt thou aid me therein and consent with me thereto?' It answered: 'On my head and eyes! Even thus 'tis behoving me and thee, namely, that we take Him as a comrade and companion and as a protector and friend. Beshrew thee, hath God created us except for this? And hath He commanded us to do aught but this? Welcome to Him whom we seek and love and adore! Welcome!' 'Thou hast spoken well,' said I; 'this is what I expected of thee.' Then I said: 'O Heart, what wilt thou say if I draw up a contract in writing to that purpose and take from thee a covenant in God's name and cause the witnesses to attest it?' 'Do as thou wilt,' it replied. So I wrote:

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate.

This is what I witness against my Heart. I make God and His angels and His prophets and His messengers and His devout worshippers to be the witness thereof in this writ. Bear witness, all of you, that my Heart, which God hath made the treasury of the knowledge of His wisdom, and which is the abode of His consciousness and volition, hath entered into a compact with me to give aid and hath consented with me to go in quest of God, on the terms that it shall dwell with Him unto everlasting and shall devote itself to Him alone, obeying Him freely, not against its will; and I have taken its promise and covenant to that purpose in God's name.

And bear witness that my heart hath accepted this compact from me upon these conditions, and that I have accepted this compact on my part, with a vow that I will never turn aside from Him whom I seek and love, neither for the sake of gifts and favors nor because of afflictions and tribulations for ever and ever.

The compact between us, to go in quest of God and seek union with Him on the conditions which I have set forth, is hereby ratified; and that was done on the night of the fifteenth day of Sha'ban in the year three hundred and ninety-five.

The eighth chapter contains a description of the seekers, in which they are compared to Muslim pilgrims setting out on the pilgrimage, with their bodies emaciated and their hearts fluttering and their eyes lifted towards the Ka'ba, 'just like bustards,' while their wives and children gaze tearfully after them.

I have already referred to the importance of the ninth chapter as the only source of the most ancient complete version yet discovered of the dream-vision (so it is described here) of Abu Yazid al-Bistami, who dreamed that he ascended to the Heavens in quest of God and was tempted with the Kingdom of each Heaven but paid no heed, saying all the while: "O my Beloved, what I desire is other than what thou offerest me."

In the tenth and last chapter the author has collected many sayings and stories of the prophets and saints. He concludes his book with the following verses:

The hearts of them that know God have eyes with which
they see what others see not,
And wings that fly without feathers, so that they have
journied into the presence of the Lord of created beings;
And tongues that converse with God and speak of a mystery
that is hidden from the Recording Angels.
Now they pasture in the meadows of Holiness, and now they
drink of the seas of Divine Knowledge.
They are those worshippers on whom the grace of God
bestowed the mystery, so that they drew nigh unto
Him and achieved the Quest.

HIRELING OR LOVER?

From the Theologia Germanica

Now wherever a man hath been made a partaker of the divine nature, in him is fulfilled the best and noblest life, and the worthiest in God's eyes that hath been or can be. And of that eternal love which loveth Goodness as Goodness and for the sake of Goodness, a true, noble, Christ-like life is so greatly beloved that it will never be forsaken or cast off. Where a man hath tasted this life, it is impossible for him ever to part with it, were he to live until the Judgment Day. And though he must die a thousand deaths, and though all the sufferings that ever befell all creatures could be heaped upon him, he would rather undergo them all than fall away from this excellent life; and if he could exchange it for an angel's life, he would not.

This is our answer to the question, "If a man by putting on Christ's life can get nothing more than he hath already, and serve no end, what good will it do him?" This life is not chosen in order to serve any end, or to get anything by it, but for love of its nobleness, and because God loveth and esteemeth it so greatly. And whoever saith that he hath had enough of it, and may now lay it aside, hath never tasted nor known it; for he who hath truly felt or tasted it, can never give it up again. And he who hath put on the life of Christ with the intent to win or deserve aught thereby, hath taken it up as an hireling and not for love, and is altogether without it. For he who doth not take it up for love, hath none of it at all. He may dream, indeed, that he hath put it on, but he is deceived. Christ did not lead such a life as His for the sake of reward, but out of love; and love maketh such a life light, and taketh away all its hardships, so that it becometh sweet and is gladly endured. But to him who hath not put it on from love, but hath done so, as he dreameth, for the sake of reward, it is utterly bitter and a weariness, and he would fain be quit of it. And it is a sure token of an hireling that he wisheth his work were at an end. But he who truly loveth it, is not offended at its toil nor suffering, nor the length of time it lasteth. Therefore it is written, "To serve God and live to Him, is easy to him who doeth it." Truly it is so to him who doth it for love, but it is hard and wearisome to him who doth it for hire. It is the same with all virtue and good works; and likewise with order, laws, obedience to precepts, and the like. But God rejoiceth more over one man who truly loveth than over a thousand hirelings.

Love cannot be made to fulfill desire for its nature is renunciation. —*Narada Bhakti Sutras*

THE VISIT OF MADAME NAIDU

One of the most significant events in connection with the opening of the new home of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, at 32 Fenway, was the visit of Madame Sarojini Naidu—poetess, nation-builder, and one-time president of the Indian National Congress — who very graciously consented to participate in the afternoon Service at the Centre, on Sunday, March 3rd, one week after the dedication of the Temple of the Universal Spirit. Madame Naidu, who has come to this country as an ambassadress of better understanding between East and West, cut into a very full program in order to give to Swami Paramananda a few hours of her time. She came as an old friend, having met the Swami at Delhi in 1926, and again at his own Ashrama in California the latter part of January 1929. But I shall let her tell of these two meetings in her own words—the same words which poured from her lips with such beauty and fire on that Sunday afternoon, charming with their fervent poetry the large congregation which had assembled to hear her. We regret that we can give only a small portion of her Address. She said:

"Friends, it was a day much brighter than this, two years ago—springtime in India—when I first met the Swami. I had promised myself to steal away from my work and go and share the springtime festivities—sing spring songs, and make poems in the open air. Yet all these delightful things I had to rob myself of in order that I might be enriched with something else. It was Sunday afternoon, an hour later than this, and the duty that robbed me of one pleasure to give me another was the occasion when the genius of this Universal Temple was to speak in Delhi, and I was to have the great privilege of occupying the chair. It was the first time I saw Swami Paramananda and I knew it was not to be the last time; because the intuition knows beforehand who are the people that one is going to meet again sometime and somewhere, and who are the people that one cannot meet and does not want to meet again. I remember Swami Paramananda said something about my coming to his Ashrama; but I had no intention of going to America. Yet I said, 'Of course I shall go some day,' and I hoped the day would be far distant. I don't know why I didn't want to go. Last year many hands stretched forth and voices were calling me here, and still I didn't want to go. I made all kinds of excuses, some valid, some not. But one very valid reason was that I had a very sick daughter. I said, 'I will leave all my work and nurse her—stay with her in the sanitarium, in the hills with the stricken.' Beautiful hills! Youth and courage! One day suddenly, for no reason—though there is always a reason for everything—one Sunday afternoon—three-thirty—sun overhead—I took an umbrella and, with a dog at my heels, walked down to the post-office. I said, 'Have you a foreign cable form? I want to send a cable to America.' They said, 'We know there is a graveyard, a burning ghat, but America is so far away.' I said, 'I am going to America.'

"On reaching this new world where everyone thinks it proper to be hurried, money-getting, underlying all the weight of steel and sound, I felt there was a passion and a hunger. I was confirmed in this as I journied from end to end of this great continent. Everywhere I found men and women wanting to know, putting out hungry hands to know, to find; not always able to tell the difference between the glittering bauble and the jewel; with not enough discrimination between the true and what seems true to take to their hearts all that they find in the search.

"When I came to California, there was a letter from Swami Paramananda awaiting me in Los Angeles, saying that he was coming to Boston—there was little time—would I come to the Ashrama? So the first thing on my arrival was to go to that very beautiful home in the hills, and that visit of mine to that very beautiful Ashrama remains among my most precious memories. As I stood on that hilltop, the spirit of love—love dreamed into labor; the birds making music; the bees making honey; men and women making life into a thing of love, of compassion, of beauty—as I felt that spirit, as I saw the acacia and all the lovely buds that open in the sun, and as I looked into that canyon, and at the guest chambers where all who need spiritual rest may come and find it, I thought of another retreat which I visited years ago in another country—sixteen or seventeen years ago. I had made a pilgrimage into the hills to an old monastery. There was a cloister with just the same view of sky and hills and flowers, just the same spirit of seeking through love and service, as in this Ashrama in the California hills, where a young man is the guiding spirit for a group of foreign disciples, proving that the unity of the spirit is the reality of life.

"There, in Italy, was only an old withered monk, and I know very little Italian. I talked to him through a friend who was with me. What he said so long ago on an Italian hillside echoed in a different tongue on the hillside in California. This old Catholic monk was a seeker, and he found repose for the spirit in that solitude—the ideal solitude—where beauty is turned into ministration, into all kinds of labor that add to the comfort and happiness of mankind. At the Ashrama I found the same spirit of transmuting all things into beauty, into service. Two or three little boxes were put into my hand by the Swami—incense to be destroyed in the fire to make the beauty of perfume. All the little things grown on the hillside were sacrificed to fill this little box of incense. Though the Swami didn't realize it, he was giving me a parable. I thought since how beautiful was the unconscious lesson of that little box he put into my hand. Just the ordinary flowers and grasses of a hillside which the eye of man may never see, the tongue of a poet never know, and yet each passing thing—fragile, insignificant—making by its death so wonderful a contribution to the heart of beauty and communion, when the flame, giving up the perfume, becomes the atmosphere of the soul in prayer. Thus it seems to me the common things of the world become the instruments of great occasion. So with all of us. Most of us are simple and insignificant; some are powerful and rich; some have opportunity just to recognize all these things which are the symbol of true greatness. But the vast majority of us are the field flowers—the weak. Yet not a blade of grass grows in vain when it can give honey to a butterfly, or be the home of a dewdrop, or when in dying it ceases not to serve, but becomes incense for the heart of prayer. This is God's message.

"I have no use for the God of creed, dogma, ritual. He is a terrible God. But the God who is tranquil, the God who is eternal, who loves the fragile light on a butterfly's wing; the God who is in all things and everywhere; the God who is content to have the glory of the Himalayas, and yet is as tender in His manifestations as a drop of dew; the God that is a God of love, who creates laughter, who teaches compassion, who speaks every day in the springtime, in the new leaf buds, in the Autumn, in the dying time—things dying so that new life may be born—that God I understand, and He has no race, no age, no dogma, no temple save the place that He chooses—the heart of all things that live. . . ."

REPORT

The month of March, at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, opened auspiciously with the welcome extended to one of India's most gifted daughters, Madame Sarojini Naidu, who was entertained at the Centre and participated in the Service, on the afternoon of Sunday, March 3rd. Following Madame Naidu within a few days came Dr. and Mrs. James H. Cousins, eminent Theosophists, who, for the past fourteen years, have identified their lives with the life of India, especially its intellectual life. Dr. Cousins, who was associated in Ireland with A. E. and Yeats, is a poet, an educator, and a fosterer of the arts; while Mrs. Cousins has been a conspicuous worker for the cause of women in the West and in India. They are travelling around the world with the purpose of drawing men together through the recognition of cultural unity. Happily, Dr. Cousins brought with him some charming examples of modern Indian painting of the school of Abanindranath Tagore, and these he put on exhibition in the large upstairs room of the Centre—popularly known as the Italian Room—thereby atracting many art lovers who, in this way, were able to make their contact with the Orient. Furthermore these works of beauty brought to the Centre a tangible greeting from the heart of India. In fact these visitors, beginning with Mr. C. F. Andrews and ending with Dr. and Mrs. Cousins, seemed like good-fairies attendant upon a birth—messengers bearing the blesing of the Motherland to the new-born Temple of the Universal Spirit.

On the evening of March 6th, after the regular Thursday dinner, Mrs. Cousins spoke to the guests on the subject of Indian Womanhood. Her talk evoked many questions and aroused an eager interest in all who were present.

One noon, Dr. Cousins gave an informal lecture in the Italian Room, interpreting the modern Indian art movement in the light of the paintings; and on Sunday, March 17th (Sri Ramakrishna's birthday), he was the guest speaker at the afternoon Service.

The special March activities of the Vedanta Centre terminated with this birthday celebration. Swami Paramananda, at the three Services which marked the day, brought out with profound feeling the different aspects of the great and universal spirit which Sri Ramakrishna's life expressed, paying tribute to that life itself—so simple, so humble, so childlike, and so transcendent. Once more the Chapel was crowded to the doors, and everywhere were heard expressions of pleasure over the growing beauty of the Temple. Its walls, under the skilled touch of an Ashrama brother, have been warmed into a glowing, golden tone; while the panels on the wall—which are to take the place of the niches in the California Temple—are gradually being filled in by another worker, with golden thoughts from the different world religions. Over the door of the Shrine, in shining letters, are the same words as are above the altar of the Temple at the Ashrama: "Where I am there is peace;" and on the opposite wall, the significant and beautiful line from one of the Swami's poems: "Thee I love in all."

On Monday, the 18th of March, the Swami left for California, where he plans to remain till the middle of April.

ANANDA ASHRAMA

Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was celebrated at the Ananda Ashrama one week later than in Boston, and, although the weather was as whimsical as a New England spring and almost as cold, several hundred people attended the Services, over one hundred partaking of the feast which the Swami prepared for them between the morning and afternoon activities.

Holy Week was observed with special Services on Thursday and on Good Friday, in addition to the regular Classes. By Easter Sunday the Weather God had relented and bestowed upon the Southland the first balmy day of the season. About 5:30 A.M., motors bearing the modern pilgrims to the Sunrise Service, began to climb up from the valley and park in the new parking space which has been recently created just under the Temple hill.

Always before at Easter, it had been the custom to hold this first Service on the grassy platform in front of the cloister. This year, however, willing hands had cleared a space on a hill adjacent to the Temple; and there, promptly at six o'clock, a large congregation gathered to hear the Swami's words as he made articulate the living beauty of the eternal dawn. While he spoke, the sky—which had hung like a pale curtain behind the soaring hills—brightened, turning from grey to rose, and from rose to blue, as the never-failing sun kept its appointment with a waiting world. First the valley was flooded with gold, then—while the rest of the Ashrama still lay enshadowed—one flaming ray shot over the shoulder of the mountains, touched the figure of the Swami with an almost unearthly brilliance, and, spreading, warmed the whole scene into radiance. Human voices rose in chorus, birds tuned in, and flowers sang loudest of all, each expressing in its own way the message of the morning. Following this Service were two more, one at 11 A.M. and one at 3:30 P.M., so that all day long the cars climbed the hill—and at every Service was manifest the same spirit of sanctity and joy—a spirit which men carried away in their hearts.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

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TREASURE OF INDIA

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Message of the East

> "And behold the glory of the God of
> Israel came from the way of the East."
> —*Ezekiel*
>
> "Light shall come again from the East."
> —*Tyndall.*

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BY THEIR FRUITS

The Milinda Panha

(Given by Grace H. Turnbull in "Tongues of Fire," after a rendering by K. J. Saunders in "The Heart of Buddhism.")

AS MEN who see the ocean rollers break
Infer the greatness of the world-embracing sea,
So may they judge of Him whose teachings take
Throughout the listening earth their course of victory.

And when the earth rejoiceth fresh and green,
"The gracious rain," they cry, "hath come at last;"
So judge they when the hearts of weary men
Rejoice, "His gracious words into their lives have passed."

As men who scent a fragrance in the air
Know the great forest trees hard-by are flowering,
So, of this perfume sweet of holiness, may they infer,
"Here surely lived a Buddha great, high-towering."

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Swami Paramananda

(An Address delivered by the Swami to the members of the Ramakrishna Mission, during his sojourn in India, 1926.)

The key to the great book of life comes to us in the form of illumined souls. Their life and light shed upon the path of mankind lustre and radiance of hope, by which means alone we find it possible to reach our true destiny. "Truth is One; men call it by various names." God is One, but we worship Him according to our different conceptions. The import of this great, universal saying becomes clarified in the simple life of Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna did not come with any pomp or splendor. He had practically no education in our sense of the word. He sought no social eminence. Even the idea of spiritual leadership had no hold upon his sanctified consciousness. Indeed his life shines like a soft, white light, ever soothing to the parched spirits of men, bringing healing balm to the wounds of the world. With us, almost every one can recite long passages from the Vedic Upanishads; many of us can quote glibly that unique passage from the Rig Veda which was given above. With him, however, it was not a question of theory, that God is One, manifesting through many. He saw it, felt it, and realized it. This consciousness was ever abiding with him.

As I study religion and philosophy in the light of the life of Sri Ramakrishna and of Swami Vivekananda, my plea is practical wisdom. To my mind, their special emphasis was upon this particular point. They laid very little stress upon doctrinal differences, observances of creeds and customs; but ever their eyes were fixed upon that which would raise the standard of humanity, and bind the hearts of men to a common ideal. They did not work with any idea of self-gratification; their hearts were too far removed from all such petty thoughts of self and self-interest. Therefore, to honor Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and other master-spirits, we must learn to produce that type amongst ourselves. Lip praise is a very poor way of showing our appreciation of these great lives.

Too often we fall into the habit of referring to our glorious past. However great the heritage we have from the past, let us find some practical way of bringing that into our present life. The great living models must be constantly reproduced and kept before us as symbols to guide our destiny. For instance, if we do not keep reproducing the type represented by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, then their great mission will be short-lived. We must not forget that the purpose of their life was not merely to enhance a special cult or creed, but to bring about a larger unity of thought and understanding among humanity. While I, myself, in connection with my work in America and abroad, very seldom use the name Vedanta or Sri Ramakrishna, yet I am ever conscious that when I succeed in conveying the unifying spirit, I am paying my homage to India and her great spiritual personages.

When we view life from the high pinnacle of blending consciousness, we see everything in new light. This entire universe assumes new meaning. Humanity, birds, beasts, animate and inanimate objects, all are then permeated by one abiding substance. Temples, chapels and churches, mosques and synagogues, all stand out as veritable symbols of one omniscient Deity. How then can man lift his hand or heart against aught, when his mind is consumed with this overwhelming reality of one all-abiding Presence. It is in this sphere of consciousness that we realize our great dream of spiritual unity—our common divine Parenthood and the brotherhood of man. The world has never benefitted substantially by mere theories of ethics or of religion. It is practical idealism which lifts the heart of man to the throne of God. When the heart is filled with love, and the mind is vibrant with living feeling, we cannot merely sit and theorize; we are impelled to do something. And it is this power which produces men of genius, mystics with exalted vision, and poets with songs of inspiration.

We may doubt our own power when we look upon our life within its narrow sphere; but when the soul expands with higher consciousness, then even our little hand becomes capable of great deeds. Then it is no longer a question of our using it, because we have learned the great art of life and living—the art of living consecration. Then we can say in unison with God-imbued souls, "Take my hand and use it as Thou wilt; take my heart; take my brain; take my all—it is Thine." When man is fortunate enough to reach this exalted spirit of self-effacement, he is blessed, and, through his hand and heart, the world also becomes blessed. We can, however, never expect to reach this height of practical idealism until our heart is cleansed of self and self-interest.

There is no selfish happiness for man. Some of us learn this lesson quickly through failures, rebuffs and disappointments. Others still cling tenaciously to that evil instinct of self, till their heart is torn asunder, and with it, the heart of humanity. For all hideous defects of life — war and devastations—rise from this origin only. Their remedy also is in the heart of man.

We know what beneficence love holds for us in every hour of our life; we know how potent it is for the upbuilding of humanity; we know its healing touch; intellectually we are aware of all its divine attributes; but only as we learn to apply it in our life will it perform miracles, quicken our dead hope, and make us vibrant with renewed life and ever fresh inspiration.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Go right on. Have good faith yet—keep that your unseen treasure untainted.

Many shall bless you. To many yet, though no word be spoken, your face shall shine as a lamp.

It shall be remembered, and that which you have desired—in silence—shall come abundantly to you.

—*Edward Carpenter*

India will be raised—not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the Spirit. —*Swami Vivekananda*

For love, to clasp Eternal Beauty close;
For glory, to be Lord of self; for pleasure,
To live beyond the gods; for countless wealth,
To lay up lasting treasure

Of perfect service rendered, duties done
In charity, soft speech, and stainless days:
These riches shall not fade away in life,
Nor any death dispraise.

—*Sir Edwin Arnold*

The game of life looks cheerful when one carries in one's heart the inalienable treasure. —*Coleridge*

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. —*Jesus the Christ*

THY TEMPLE

By Puran Singh

(Extract from a poem, "Thy Offering," in "Sisters of the Spinning Wheel.")

What can I offer Thee?
I have nothing!
I have been to the loneliest flower in the desert,
And the flower said to me: "Pluck me not, I am the flower of the Temple."
I have been to the snow-covered rocks that held the most glowing rubies!
As I touched them, the rubies oped their lips and said: "We are of the treasury of the Temple."
Whenever and whatever I touch to make it mine, even for an offering,
An ancient voice replies: "All is God's."
All things are Thine!
All is in Thy Temple!
All Thy people are going to Thy Temple! each one has an offering for Thee!
The rich lady has a purse of gold, and the poor a handful of maize or wheat!
The young girls have their white muslin shawls full of roses and jasmine and narcissus!
And the young men have the reverent joy of their hearts enclosed in the lotus-wreaths they have in their hands!
The young and the old all gather in thy Temple!
The white beards with the black side by side!
The chastened thoughtful flesh, and the young flesh full of a hundred new meanings, side by side in Thy Temple!
The throngs of pilgrims! The smiles and tears mingle in Thy Temple!

THE TREASURE OF INDIA

By Charushila Devi

It may sound rather absurd to talk of the treasure of India, depleted, broken-down India, where perhaps hundreds are dying of disease—India, that cannot feed her hungry mouths, that cannot cover her nude bodies, that cannot take care of her babies—truly it seems absurd to talk about her treasure. Yet, when we look back, we see that India was at one time the richest country in the world. It was the fame of her riches that invited the foreigners to invade her sanctuaries, causing bloodshed and unrest. There is one little temple, the temple of Somanath, which was visited by a single conqueror twenty-one times. Think of it! One temple, twenty-one times; and other temples were robbed also. The name of this plunderer was Mahmud, the ruler of Gazni, capital of Afghanistan, a neighboring country to India. And it is said that every time he came, he filled his purse and loaded his caravan with gems and gold. You may wonder how this could be possible. Let me tell you how it was possible. In India, even today, a beggar loves to give his last penny to the Lord. There is a pleasure, a joy, in laying everything down at His feet. So, of course, the Maharajas, kings and emperors used to offer their best to the temples.

Why to a temple, you ask: Isn't God everywhere? Yes. Indian mind knows that. It knows that when one feeds a poor man, or even an animal, when one treats a little insect compassionately and lovingly, one serves God. Indian mind knows it. But a temple where millions and millions of hearts have bowed down with reverence, where thousands of consecrated lives have waited just at its door, there one feels the living Presence. It is inspiring; when you go there you forget yourself. You may enter it, not believing in this image worship; you may call it a heathen temple; but in spite of yourself, if you are not hard as iron, you will feel the atmosphere; you cannot help it. Of course, in every house there is a little shrine, a family shrine, for daily meditation and worship; but people like to visit the temple whenever they can, in order to feel that bigness, that oneness of the cosmic universe; in order to worship the same Deity that millions of people are worshipping, drawing their life-water from the Source from which countless thousands are drawing it; just like rivers flowing with the same water and going to meet the same sea. How beautiful, and how big and boundless is the feeling! No wonder that the kings and rulers brought their offerings to the altar.

And not only to the altar. We hear of the Taj Mahal, how every design on its walls was inlaid with precious stones, gems, brilliants; every door is of carved sandalwood, and all the floors of white marble. Again we hear about the peacock throne of Shah Jehan. The seat of the throne is the peacock, the back is the tail of the peacock, and each little feather is made of jewels. But what of that? What do these earthly riches signify? How many empires have risen and gone down again! Some of them we cannot trace even. The temples can be robbed of their riches; the stones on the walls of the Taj Mahal can be replaced with colored glass, and the doors with imitation sandalwood. But India has one treasure of which nothing can rob her: the immortal treasure she has carried in her bosom from time immemorial. In spite of her suffering and privation she has carried it; and because she is carrying it, she has not gone down; she is still living. Just that alone is giving her strength to go on through all her trials, through fire, water, thunder, everything. The power of that treasure we feel in the Vedas, in the Upanishads, the Gita, and many other Scriptures and holy books. The lustre of that treasure we see in the gems that it has produced throughout the centuries. When we look back to the Vedic age we behold immortal seers seeming to defy the conditions of this mortal life; and later, illumined teachers instructing yearning souls in the forest. Then we see Buddha, Mirabhai, Mahabir, Lord Gouranga and many more; again in the modern age, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Besides these, there are others of whom we never hear; even their names we do not know. In order to serve the cause of humanity, they hide themselves in some Himalayan forest where nothing can reach them, where they can seek Truth undisturbed by the confusions of the world.

"First seek ye the Kingdom of God, all other things will be added unto you," that is their motto. After years, they may go down to some village in a remote corner of India for the purpose of contacting the human minds there, to remind them of their divine heritage, to set the example of what a man may be, to show them the way to their goal. Even today, going through a village, you will find a little cottage where some holy man used to live. It has become like a shrine where people gather to pay homage. Years may have gone by since the holy man lived there, his very name may have been forgotten, but his spirit abides and they give their homage to that.

Was the life that they reverence a wasted life—a life of negation? No! Abandoning the body, such souls leave behind as an immortal heritage the tradition of the pursuit of holiness, of the power of self-denial, the strength of selfless love. This treasure they bequeath to humanity to produce gems as the world has need of them. I say "the world," because these men do not belong to India alone; they belong to the whole of mankind. We cannot limit them to any one country. Modern thought may call them crazy, because it does not understand. On a dark, dismal day when clouds are heavy and we do not see the sun, we confine ourselves in the house and light our little candles, or our other lights, for it is dark and we feel we cannot do without them. But when the sun comes out with all its splendour and glory, what do we do? We extinguish the artificial light, and open the doors and windows to let in the sunlight. We want to run outside and lose ourselves in that beautiful radiance. The same is it with the light of the Spirit. It is hard for us to understand, because we are leading artificial lives; we are living in darkness. We have not caught a glimpse of that Sun of Light. But the Holy Ones have seen it, and they go out to it, leaving everything else behind.

But why, if she has such a treasure, is India suffering? Why cannot she get rid of her troubles and privations? It is a question we hear everywhere. Let me tell you something of India. Hardly any nation has gone through as much misery as she has endured for centuries, and still lives on as she is living today. She has not gone down. When a Hindu father cannot feed his children properly he may feel as though he would commit suicide, but in the morning, as he sits in his shrine, he finds his balance, and this short time of inner communion gives him so much strength, so much power, that he is able to go on again, uplifted above the trials and sufferings of life. That is India's way of helping and she will always help that way.

Every day from different parts of the world, tourists go to India and bring back pictures and lantern-slides showing, perhaps, a man lying on spikes, or one who has painted himself like a leopard, or is shamelessly displaying his nude body in public. You turn away in disgust, saying: "We have heard so much of India's spiritual life; is this a picture of it?" I do not blame you, neither do I blame them. They do not know how difficult it is to see a holy man. Some lines from one of the Swami's poems come to my mind:

> "When pure Spirit shines, who sees it?
> Few, yea, only a very few;
> For not many have the seeing eye. . . ."

How true it is! Among many stones there may be a real jewel, but it is very difficult to discriminate. You must have your mind's eye open. Do not think, if you come to India today, that you will find these rare gems scattered all over the country. If you find one truly illumined soul in a lifetime, you are fortunate. And even though you may be fortunate enough to meet one, you may not be fortunate enough to understand him. You may see him and pass him by in your rush and hurry. When, however, we do recognize such a one, there is no longer any calculation, no longer anything but just the feeling in our hearts that we have found the ideal of our life. He shines like a flame; his inner and outer life are one. When we come near him, we feel safety, we feel uplifted, free from all the worries and woes which we have been carrying. They seem to fall away; we are unburdened. That is the proof of a holy man, of one who is one with the Divine. And it is this light which illumines every phase of Indian life and living.

In India, you cannot separate the spiritual from the worldly side; her spirituality is intertwined with her daily activities. A mother loves her children because of the Lord; she feels that they are a manifestation of the Deity she has been worshipping all her days. When she nurses them she thinks she is serving her Lord. Or when the wife loves her husband, she doesn't love him only because he is her husband, but because she knows there is that great Divine Self in him. A husband loves his wife because he looks upon her as an expression of Divine love. When a guest comes to your house you welcome him as God in human form and feel that in serving him you serve God. Thus you bring God into everything—play with Him; make love with Him; connect Him with every act, word and thought. When a tillers of the ground plows the soil, you will hear him sing:

> "O my mind, you do not know the art of cultivation;
> Such beautiful, human soil has remained fallow.
> If you knew how to cultivate it, it would produce gold."

Or perhaps in the evening when the twilight is coming down, you will hear a boatman rowing his boat and singing:

> "O my mind, take your oar . . ."

Evening in India is very quiet, and that is the time to listen. I was connected with a school, and the school was near the river. Often I would take a seat on the balcony toward the water in order to hear that boatman sing. Beautiful words they were; but I have forgotten them now.

Sometimes a woman will come to your house to sell vegetables. You ask, "How many children have you, my good woman?" She lifts her eyes to the sky, saying, "They are not mine but the Lord's. He has entrusted three (or four or six, whatever the number is) to me; they are not mine." The most common woman will answer that way.

I remember once a little boy of twelve who was going from a village to some town on an urgent errand. It was night time, and the road he had to follow lay through a forest abounding with tigers. The previous night a man had been killed by a tiger. I said to him, "Well, my boy, don't you feel afraid to go?" The way he answered me made me ashamed of myself. With such surrender, lifting his beautiful eyes to me, he said, "Mother, when the call comes, I have to answer it." This same spirit you find in all phases of life—spirituality interlaced with every word, every action, and that is the treasure of India, the power that is sustaining her through all her sufferings.

The way is very difficult. Sometimes she falls under her burden; but she regains her strength and goes on. Outer conditions make such an impression on our inner life that we cannot always rise above them. The modern Hindu youth reading a few pages of science may think he can do without religion, without spirituality. He believes that material gain will give him everything. He doesn't know that material gain is nothing. Today it comes, and tomorrow we do not find it any more. But spirituality is the vitality of his life. It is the lifeblood running through his every vein. He cannot deny it. The very soil of India, from which his body has gathered its material, is full of the dust of the holy bones from sanctified bodies. The majesty of the Himalayan mountains reminds us of our Divine heritage, and from time immemorial comes the voice: "Hear ye, children of immortal bliss!" Today, in spite of her sufferings and privations and lacks and drawbacks, the Mother is guarding that immortal treasure, is nurturing it in her bosom for you, for all. Holding her torch aloft, she is calling, "Come and take! You are the heirs of this great treasure. Do not forget; do not wander about. Come and take! Come to me and take!"

That person who has renounced all visible creatures and in whom God performs His will completely—that person is both God and man. His body is so completely penetrated with Divine light and with the soul essence which is of God that he can properly be called a Divine Man. For this reason, my children, be kind to these men, for they are strangers and aliens in the world. Those who wish to come to God have only to model their lives after these men. No one can know them unless he has within him the same light—the light of Truth.—*Meister Eckhart.*

INCOMMUNICABLE TREASURE*

From the Teachings of Gautama Buddha

In a deep-dug pit a man buries a treasure with this thought: "In time of need 'twill be a help to me, or if the raja speak ill of me, if by a robber I am plundered, or to pay my debts, or when food is hard to get, or when ill-luck befalls."

Such are the reasons in this world for burying a treasure. Yet all this treasure thus well concealed in its deep hiding-place—it profits the owner not at all. For either it vanishes away from its hiding-place, or his wits go wandering (so that he forgets where it is laid), or the nagas convey it away, or the goblins filch it. Or his foes, or even his kinsmen, carry it off when he watches not. For when one's merit is used up, all that treasure perishes.

But by charity, by righteousness, by self-restraint, and taming of the self, there is a treasure well concealed for woman or for man.

It is a treasure incommunicable to others, that robbers cannot steal away. Let the wise man do good deeds: that is the treasure that follows after one!

This is a treasure that gives all manner of delight to devas and to men. With it may be won whatsoever things they aspire for.

A fair face, a sweet voice, beauty and grace, pomp and circumstance—all these this treasure can obtain.

Sovereignty and lordship, the bliss of universal rule that is so dear to man: yea, rule in heaven among the devas—all these things this treasure can procure.

Worldly prosperity and heaven's delights, the winning of Nirvana—all these things are by this treasure won.

* Translated by F. L. Woodward, M.A.

He who hath attained a goodly fellowship, by cleaving thereto can win knowledge, release, and self-control—all these are won thereby.

Clear insight, freedom of mind, all the perfections of the disciple, the enlightenment of self by Self, yea, even the state of Buddhahood—all these are by this treasure to be won.

Such mighty magic power hath the treasure of good deeds. Wherefore are good deeds done by wise and learned men.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE*

From "Notes of Conversations with Swami Turiyananda"

Swami Vivekananda's lecture on Vedanta was read. Swami Turiyananda said:

"His words have melted away into the air. With all your renunciation and your learning, what have you been doing? Days are passing, but you are simply vegetating. Who ever feels or says as the Master did at the end of each day: 'O Mother, the day is gone, yet I have not seen Thee!' You are damp, spiritless and inactive. Do you not feel your blood wax hot when you read the words of Swamiji: "Who is living-dead? He who is effortless."

20th July.

Swami T: "You will have to work your mind yourself. Others cannot do that. The Master said again and again: 'You must try a little. Only then will the Guru reveal the truth.' Let me tell you from our experience, that if any one advances towards him a single step, He advances him ten steps. This is our personal experience. If you do not make some effort, none can do anything for you. The Great Ones point out the way. Is that little help? If you tell us your mind, we can help you. We also have travelled the same path, so we can tell you about it. Does one want that the butter should be churned out and held before his lips? Even then he keeps his mouth shut. Have we to feed him also? This is a mental disease, *styana* (idleness)—the mind refuses to labor or do anything.

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* Compiled from the "Prabuddha Bharata."

"Do you ask: 'Will not the Lord do anything for his devotee?' Yes, He will. But first you will have to become a devotee; you must learn to feel devotion for Him. And devotion, *Bhakti,* is no trifling thing. You have to give him your mind, life, everything. If you cannot do that, then cry to Him for not having attained Him, for not loving Him. People have to shed potfuls of tears before they can earn money. If you do not do that for God, why should He do anything for you? If you feel miserable for want of Him, know that He is very near to you—you will soon have His vision, soon realize infinite bliss.

"Everyone wants to exhibit his good side and conceal his evils. Whoever can speak out his own faults frankly, will get rid of them. It is not easy to confess so. If any one does so, know that he has worth in him.

"You must make every one your own. The more you approach God, the more you will become frank, sincere and generous. Our Master was the very personification of guilelessness and sincerity.

"He who has realized the Personal God can also realize the Impersonal if he so wills. But he often retains his 'I' in order to taste the love and bliss of God. He also has the knots of his heart sundered, and has realized his real nature. He does not seek Nirvana. He is no longer afraid of the world. He who wants Nirvana laboriously works his way to the goal, ever anxiously protecting himself against the world. But is it not better to be afraid of nothing?"

In course of a letter which the Swami wrote that day to a devotee, he observed: "If you are miserable for not having realized God, the more this mood grows, the more you will earn His grace. Intensify it still more. But if your misery is due to other reasons, then shake it off."

30th July.

Swami T: "Mere suppression of passions is little use. There must be a high ideal along with self-restraint. Without a high ideal, the passions will find another outlet. You must give them a new direction. Then you will be automatically rid of them. 'Take refuge in Me and control the senses.'

"To stand on one's own legs means to rely on that 'I' which also comprehends the cosmic 'I'; not on the 'I' which thinks it is so and so and has passed so many examinations, etc.—to stand on this is no use.

"Work should be looked upon as a *Jajna*, a sacrifice. All work should be done perfectly, even as one would perform a sacrifice. Every work should be considered a *sadhana*, a means of God-realization. Only thus will character be formed.

"Man always seeks advantage. He has been doing it not only in this life, but also in many previous lives. *Mukti* (Emancipation) is nothing but giving up seeking advantage. Man wants to avoid suffering; he is always sparing himself. Swamiji used to say that man wants only to gossip.

"This *Sannyasin* life is no fun. One must live very cautiously. One must be very alert and circumspect. One must never retaliate; one must endure. If you retaliate, it will rebound on you. It is no child's play. The *Sannyasin's* life is an attempt at going beyond all life. He alone will be saved who dwells constantly on good thoughts."

Never feel shy to practise religion, fearing criticism of the ignorant ,or scoff of the world.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

TEMPLE OF HUMANITY

By Friedrich Max Muller

(A letter written to the Rev. M. K. Schermerhopn, 1883)

It is always a great satisfaction to see the budding germs of the seed which one has helped to sow. I wish you all success in your endeavours after a religion of humanity, but success to be solid, must not be too rapid. The true religion of the future will be the fulfillment of all the religions of the past—the true religion of humanity, that which, in the struggle of history, remains as the indestructible portion of all the so-called false religions of mankind. There never was a false god, nor was there ever really a false religion, unless you call a child a false man. All religions, so far as I know them, had the same purpose; all were links in a chain which connects heaven and earth, and which is held, and always was held, by one and the same hand.

All here on earth tends toward right, and truth, and perfection; nothing here on earth can ever be quite right, quite true, quite perfect, not even Christianity—or what is now called Christianity—so long as it excludes all other religions, instead of loving and embracing what is good in each. Nothing, to my mind, can be sadder than reading the sacred books of mankind—and yet nothing more encouraging. They are full of rubbish; but among that rubbish there are old stones which the builders of the true Temple of Humanity will not reject—must not reject, if their Temple is to hold all who worship God in spirit, in truth, and in life.

Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free.
—*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

THE TASHI LAMA*

By Sven Hedin, K.C.I.E.

When Dr. Sven Hedin made his memorable visit to Tibet, he went as a scientist and an explorer, interested, no doubt, in the cultural and religious aspects of the country, but primarily concerned with its geography. His eye was the cool eye of the exact observer; his temperament Nordic. Certainly not the man to see things through the rosy mist of the mysterious. These facts lend exceeding great value to his appraisement of one who was, and probably still is, supreme spiritual head of the vast order of Tibetan lamas, a hierarchical system which we had come to associate with prayer-wheels, devil-dancers and dirt. Gems of Northern Buddhistic thought, it is true, had found their way into our libraries, and travellers had hinted of ancient spiritual records preserved in the crypts of some of the monasteries which honeycomb the Tibetan mountainsides; but that Lhasa or Shigatse could produce a living gem, that there was the tradition of holiness still there, preserved in spite of political intrigue and corruption, of this there had been no hint, till Dr. Sven Hedin wrote his tribute to the Tashi Lama, which we herewith reprint.

There are souls that no impurity can stain, who spring like flowers from a polluted soil; on the other hand, nothing can survive for long that is entirely evil. Especially is this true of a religious organization. The Tashi Lama is wholly and completely a product of Lamaism, so far as environment and training are concerned. On the death of his predecessor he is chosen for this high office when he is a babe in arms, and from that time on knows no other home than the Labrang, no other teaching than that given him by the Grand Lamas. Thus he cannot be considered apart from his background.

*Extracted from "Trans-Himalaya"—Pub. 1909.

Since Dr. Sven Hedin's visit to Shigatse, jealousy and politics have forced the Tashi Lama to take refuge in China. What has happened to him since then we have been unable to ascertain, since events occurring "east of Suez" go often unreported in the West.

The 12th of February came, the day on which I was to be received by the holiest man in Tibet. I therefore made myself as spruce as I had ever done for a ball in a British Government House, and then rode up to the main entrance to Tashi-lunpo, where Tsaktserkan, Lobsang Tsering, and some monks awaited us. In their company we ascended to the higher regions, through a labyrinth of gloomy lanes and dark narrow cloisters, to the Labrang, where the Tashi Lama lives—the Vatican, with its white facade, its large quaint windows, and its solid balconies standing high above this town of temple buildings. Our conductor leads us into cold dark rooms, up unusually steep staircases. The steps, in which the soles of the monks have worn deep hollows, are edged with iron, and the round bars of the balustrade are polished by innumerable hands. The steps are dark, and our friends warn us to mount slowly and cautiously. Then there is light, and we are taken out on to a gallery, a roof, but only to plunge again into a maze of dark passages and flights of steps. I am asked to wait in a room with red cushions on the floor.

Before long we are informed that the man next in rank to the Tashi Lama, the honourable fat little lama who holds the post of minister of state, is ready to receive us. His audience chamber, or rather his private cell, is quite a small room, but from its single window he enjoys a beautiful view over the sacred town of Shigatse and the rocky mountains of the neighborhood. The room is fitted up with solid, unpretentious, and genuine Lamaist luxury. The venerable prelate sat cross-legged on a bench fixed against the wall and covered with red cushions. He beamed with fat, inward complacence and goodwill, like any other cardinal; his features were finely cut, and his eyes indicated great intelligence. We talked about an hour over one thing or another, and His Eminence begged me to excuse the delay, but the Panchen Rinpoche was absorbed in meditation and occupied with his daily prayers and might not be disturbed till he himself gave a sign.

This moment came at length; a lama whispered to the cardinal that I was expected. We go still higher up smooth steep staircases to open landings, up more steps, higher and higher to the holiest of the holies in the monastery of Tashi-lunpo. The conversation is carried on in lower, more subdued tones—one dares no longer speak loud—small groups of lamas stand in the corridors and passages, silent as statues, and look at me as I pass by. Lobsang Tsering tells me in a whisper that we are now in the last antechamber, where I can make myself ready and put on the black shoes. Here my servants are ordered to remain, except Robert and Muhamed Isa. If I could have dispensed with interpreters His Holiness would have seen me quite alone.

We enter, not without feeling solemn. I make a deep bow at the door, and two more before I stand before him. The Tashi Lama is sitting on a bench in a window recess and has in front of him a small table with a tea-cup, a telescope, and some printed sheets. He is dressed as simply as an ordinary monk, wears a cerise costume of the usual style coat, waistcoat, vest and the long scarf which is thrown over the shoulder and wound round the body like a toga; between its folds peeps out a yellow under-vest with gold embroidery;

both arms are bare and the head is uncovered. His complexion is fair, slightly inclining to yellow; he is somewhat below the middle height, is well proportioned, looks healthy, and at his twenty-fifth year, lately completed, has every prospect of attaining a good old age. In his small, soft, delicate hands he holds a rosary of red beads. His short-cropped hair is black and there is scarcely any down on his upper lip; his lips are not thick and full like those of other Tibetans, but thin and gracefully formed, and his eyes are of a chestnut-brown color.

Nodding kindly, he gives me both his hands and invites me to sit in an arm-chair beside him. The apartment, in which he spends the greater part of the day, is astonishingly plain, quite a contrast to that of the cardinal in the lower regions. It is small and consists of two parts; the outer is a kind of roofless ante-room, exposed to all the winds of heaven, to the snow in winter and the pouring rain in autumn; the inner is raised a step, and is again separated by a division ending in a grille, behind which his bedroom is situated. There is not a single idol, no wall painting or other mural decoration, no furniture except what has been already mentioned, not a thread of carpet, only the bare stone floor—and through the window his melancholy and dreamy, but clear and open glances wander over the golden temple roofs, over the town below them with its dirt and sinfulness, over the dreary mountains which bound his earthly horizon, and away through the azure-blue sky to a Nirvana invisible to us, where his spirit will one day find rest. Now he descended from his heaven and became a man for a moment. But all the time he preserved a wonderful calmness, a refined, amiable politeness and dignity, and spoke in a charmingly soft and subdued voice, modest, almost shy; he spoke quickly and in short sentences, but in a very low tone.

What did we talk about? Why, about all kinds of things in heaven and earth, beginning from his own religion, in the Pantheon of which he himself takes the highest rank among living prelates, down to the yaks that roam wild over Chang-tang. He displayed an alertness, an interest in everything, and an intelligence that surprised me in a Tibetan. I have never been interviewed so thoroughly and with so much tact. Firstly, he inquired if I had suffered much from the cold and hardships in Chang-tang, and whether we had had great losses. Then he hoped I would excuse the sorry entertainment I had met with; it was all owing to my having arrived quietly and unnoticed.

Then followed inquiries about my name, my age, my caravan, the routes by which I had come. He asked what countries I had visited and whether I had seen much of India, where he had been so well received a year ago. He was particularly pleased at having been able to visit the holy places he knew so well from descriptions and pictures, which were connected with the great founder of his religion, Buddha; especially Buddha Gaya in Magadha, where Prince Sarvarthasiddha had passed six years in solitude and meditation, overcome Mara, the tempter—the ruler of the world of lust—and had attained to perfect wisdom.

Then he turned the conversation to the European Powers, and thought that Europe was a singular mosaic of states. He brought out a picture showing all the more powerful supreme rulers of the earth. Under each portrait the name and country were written in Tibetan characters. He put many questions about each monarch, and showed the liveliest interest in their fortunes—he who is more powerful than all the kings of the world, for he rules over the faith and the souls of men from the Kalmucks on the Volga to the Buryats on Lake Baikal, from the shores of the Arctic Ocean to the burning sun of India.

Of the two supreme pontiffs of the yellow-caps Koppen says: "Of these the Panchen Rinpoche at Tashi-lunpo is usually supposed to be an incarnation of the Dhyani Buddha of the present age of the world, Amitabha,* but also an incarnation of the Bodhisattvas, Manjusri and Vajrapani, and lastly almost as a re-birth of the reformer Tsong Kapa, the founder of the yellow-caps; the Dalai Lama, on the other hand, is always held to be a re-incarnation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara (Padmapani). . . ." In the same work, the functions of teacher and king are divided between the two Lamaist popes, the former being especially assigned to the Panchen, the latter to the Dalai Lama. And this is also signified by the titles of the two potentates, for the former is called Panchen Rinpoche, "the Great Precious Teacher," and the latter Gyalpo Rinpoche, "the Precious King." In consequence of this idea the Dalai Lama has at length become the temporal ruler of the greater part of Tibet, though he owes his position more to the situation and historical connections of his capital than to this scholastic theory of sanctity. The great teacher (the Tashi Lama) has therefore for the present to content himself with a comparatively small territory, combined with a reputation for sanctity and omniscience, and the privilege of acting as tutor and guardian to an infant Dalai Lama. And Waddell says of the respective spheres of the two popes: "The Tashi-lunpo Grand Lamas are considered to be, if possible, holier even than those of Lhasa, as they are less contaminated with temporal government and worldly politics—more famous for their learning."

But we will return to the audience. Lamas, walking on their toes and silent as phantoms, handed us tea and fruits continually. The Tashi Lama drank a sip from his plain cup with me, as though to show that he did not consider himself too holy to sit at table with an unbeliever. Some lamas who stood in the room at a distance were now and then dismissed by a wave of the hand when he wished to put some question he did not want them to hear.

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* Buddha of Boundless Light—Divine prototype of all Buddhas; a conception peculiar to northern or Mahayana Buddhism.

I seized the opportunity to beg for certain favours. I asked permission to photograph him. Oh, certainly, I might come again with my camera, if I liked. I asked to be allowed to see the whole of Tashi-lunpo, and to draw and photograph in the cloister town at my pleasure. "Yes, by all means; I have already ordered the lamas to show you everything." And, finally, I begged for a passport for future journeys in his country, for an official of the Labrang, and some reliable men as escort. This, too, was granted me, and all was to be in order when I had fixed the day of my departure. All these promises were fulfilled to the smallest detail, and if China had not just at this time seized Tibet more tightly than ever in its dragon's claws, the Tashi Lama would certainly have been powerful enough to throw every door open to me. But at any rate his friendship and favor were an excellent recommendation in all my subsequent journeys, and extricated me from many a difficult situation. Pilgrims from all parts of Tibet had seen with their own eyes how well I was received. They had boundless respect for the Tashi Lama, reposed in him the most sincere confidence, and reasoned as follows: "Whoever this stranger may be, he must be an eminent lama in his own country, or the Panchen Rinpoche would never have treated him as his equal." And then these pilgrims returned to their black tents in distant provinces and related to others what they had seen, and when we arrived with our small caravan all knew who we were. Eighteen months later it came about that chiefs and monks said: "Bombo Chimbo, we know that you are a friend of the Tashi Lama, and we are at your service."

When we had conversed for two hours, I made a move to leave him, but the Tashi Lama pushed me back on to the chair and said: "No, stay a little longer." And this was repeated till quite three hours had passed. How many millions of believers would have given years of their lives for such a privilege! The pilgrims who had travelled hundreds of miles to get a sight of him must be content with a nod of the head and a blessing from a distance.

Wonderful, never-to-be-forgotten Tashi Lama! Never has any man made so deep and ineffaceable an impression on me. Not as a divinity in human form, but as a man, who in goodness of heart, innocence, and purity approaches as near as possible to perfection. I shall never forget his expression: it displayed unbounded kindness, humility, and philanthropy; and I have never seen such a smile, a mouth so delicately formed, so noble a countenance. His smile never left him: he smiled like a sleeper dreaming of something beautiful and desirable; and whenever our eyes met, his smile grew broader, and he nodded kindly and amiably, as much as to say: "Trust in my friendship implicitly, for my intentions are good towards all men."

The incarnation of Amitabha! The earthly shell in which the soul of Amitabha lives on through time! Therefore a deity full of supernatural wisdom and omniscience. The Tibetans believe that he knows not only what is and has been, but also all that is to come. Can he be Amitabha himself? This much is certain, that he is a very extraordinary man, a singular, unique and incomparable man. I told him that I thought myself fortunate to have seen him, and that I should never forget the hours I had spent in his company; and he replied that he should be very pleased if I came back again. After I had thanked him once more for his generous hospitality and kindness, he called some lamas and ordered them to show me the temples. Then he gave me both his hands and followed me with his wonderful smile as I bowed myself out. His friendly eyes did not leave me till I had passed through the door leading into the ante-chamber.

At the foot of the first staircase several lamas were waiting; they smiled in silence and with wide-opened eyes, no doubt thinking that so long an audience was an unusual favor. Henceforth they all treated me with greater respect, and it was evident that very evening that the whole bazaar and all the town of Shigatse knew that I had spent three hours with the holy one. For my part I could hardly think of anything else but the Tashi Lama and the powerful impression he had made on me. I left the Labrang, his cloister palace, intoxicated and bewitched by his personality. This one day was worth many days in Tibet, and I felt that I had now beheld what was most remarkable in the country, scarcely surpassed by the massive mountains with their snow-capped summits, which from remote periods have looked down on the births and deaths of generations in the valleys which wind about their feet.

He was one of those rare, refined, and noble personalities who make other people feel that their lives are fuller and more precious. Yes, the memory of the Tashi Lama will cleave to me as long as I live. His friendship is sincere, his shield is spotless and bright, he seeks for the truth honestly and humbly, and knows that by a virtuous and conscientious life he renders himself a worthy temple for the soul of the mighty Amitabha.

Thus he lives as a binder together of those who are divided, an encourager of those who are friends . . . a lover of peace, impassioned for peace, a speaker of words that make for peace.—*Tevijja-Sutta.*

THE ORIENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

By Charles Cuthbert Hall, D.D., LL.D.

(From "Christ and the Eastern Soul," a series of lectures delivered in India in the winter of 1906-7.)

The East is the home of many nations, differing one from another in language, in modes of dress, in forms of tools and weapons, in laws of marriage and property, in moral and religious doctrines. Like the West, whether more or less conspicuously, the East bears the revolutionary marks of time, its upheavals, its cleavages, its reconstructions. Yet the East has a spirit that is all its own, a spirit that broods over its multitudinous life like the soft atmosphere of gentle love not unmingled with sorrow.

In that far-off land where my home is, amidst the beauteous valleys and mountain ranges of Northern America, there occurs, late in the autumn of each year, a phenomenon that we cherish as one of the loveliest appearances of nature. The summer has long since passed away; the harvests are all garnered; the autumn is far spent; the frosts have turned the forests to color masses of crimson and russet and gold; the first premonitory blasts of winter have sounded through the groves—heralds of ice and snow—when suddenly, for a few brief days, there comes a great calm in heaven, and on earth, a celestial armistice. The wind is hushed; the severity of frost is withdrawn; the sun breathes into the atmosphere fragrance and warmth; hill and vale, forest and river are wrapped together in one mantle of dream-like stillness. For a few days, this unwonted silence and peace of nature continue, then the loud challenge of winter sounds, and life resumes its conflict, it struggles, its constructive toil. . . . I know of nothing in nature that more nobly typifies the spirit of the Oriental consciousness than that phenomenon of the Western year which, as if by prophetic instinct, we have called Indian summer. That brief period of repose in nature, of dreamlike calm, of antithesis to the stern, cold, eager Western winter, of pathos that is not like grief, but rather like thought which lies too deep for tears, suggests the mental atmosphere which, not for a few brief days, but eternally, spreads over the expanse of Eastern life.

The East has known with more intimacy, if it be possible, than the West those peace destroyers—war, upheaval of dynasties, acute forms of social distress. The East has been called more often than the West to submit to injustice, to endure the sickness of hope deferred, to bow the shoulder to burdens unrighteously imposed. Yet whatever contentions and upheavals on the surface of society, whatever blasts of plague or famine, desolating homes and hearths, whatever injustice or oppression; in the upper atmosphere of the Oriental consciousness there abides the calm, the sadness, and the sunlight of an Indian summer of the soul. Who can interpret it? Who has the right to attempt to interpret it?

From that most ancient and most complex psychological mystery, which I have called the Oriental Consciousness, I select four elements, each of which produces upon my Western powers of apprehension the impression of sublimity. They are these: *The Contemplative Life; the Presence of the Unseen; Aspiration toward Ultimate Being; the Sanction of the Past.* If I venture to speak of these, it is . . . with reserve and modesty mingled with reverence and admiration.

The Contemplative Life is the life that is ruled by thought; that esteems thought to be the treasure whose price is above rubies, the honorable portion for which wealth and worldly power may not be taken in exchange. . . . The Contemplative Life is the life that puts thought above action, the invisible above the visible, as the major interest of existence; that pays homage first to the mind and things of the mind; afterward to the body and the things of the body. The life of action is not incompatible with the life of contemplation, but subordinate to it. And especially is the life of materialistic action subordinate: The struggle of competitive acquisition, lust after riches, pride of display, arrogance of possession, scheming ingenuity to override the interests or the efforts of another, so as to accumulate wealth. From this the Contemplative Life turns wearily aside, asking only to be left at leisure to think its way onward to the goal of God.

May I say that I seem to have found in the East the natural home of the Contemplative Life? Its value, its appropriateness for man, its ennobling harmony with man's nature and destiny, its abiding satisfactions as against feverish struggle for things, and short-lived enjoyment of them, many in the West have known. And many more in these latter days, jaded with the quest of the visible, are seeking the path of contemplation. But behind you and your seers lies the long Indian summer of the soul, thousands of years of the Contemplative Life. It has given you certain elements of personality, and certain qualifications for world-efficiency which misguided imitation of our Western ways could only imperil. You have been Orientals since the dawn of the world. Continue to be Orientals forever, till the world's last twilight closes in the final darkness. Cling to the Contemplative Life: your glorious heritage, your peculiar strength. It has given you elements of personality of which the West stands in need, and shall one day come seeking at your hand. It has given you repose, gentleness, patience, gravity, noble indifference alike to material possession and material privation, eternal remembrance of things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

REPORT

After being absent only about two weeks, Swami Paramananda returned to Boston April 13th, thus maintaining the rhythm which has drawn him east every month since last October, and which carried him back to the west, so as to arrive in California by May 1st. This brief visit was marked as usual by special activity, centering this time around the Thursday night dinners, which, when the Swami is present, draw as many people as used formerly to attend his annual dinner—in the early days of the work, the big event of the year.

The first Thursday, April 18th, was set aside as an evening of friendly interchange with members of the Theosophical Society, some of whom had expressed a desire to come in closer touch with the Centre. During the social hour which followed the repast, the Swami talked informally of the basic principles of the work, and the spirit animating it.

The following Thursday, April 25th, there was a rare treat for the guests, in the form of music of a very high order, contributed by Mr. Hansen, one of the first violinists of the Boston Symphony. With great generosity, Mr. Hansen played several numbers without any accompaniment, expressing through this medium what the Swami conveyed through his gracious and sanctified hospitality. This kind friend also gave of his art on the Sunday previous, blending the tones of the Shubert Serenade with the silence of the meditation.

Monday evening, April 22nd, at the invitation of friends, the Swami spoke in New York City at the rooms of the Arcane Society. Although the time of preparation had been short, there was a large attendance and much warmth of enthusiasm. The following morning the Swami addressed a more intimate gathering at a private studio, returning to Boston that same afternoon, in time to conduct the Tuesday night Class at the Centre. Saturday, April 27th, he departed for California, leaving the Boston work in charge of Srimati Charushila Devi of India, and Sister Daya.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

The month of April was marked by no special event at the Ananda-Ashrama, save the observance of the Lord Buddha's birthday, which was celebrated on Tuesday, April 23rd, at a moonlight Service. Swami Paramananda was at that time in Boston, but in spite of this, nearly a hundred people assembled in the moon-enchanted patio of the Temple of the Universal Spirit to hear Srimati Gayatri Devi pay tribute to the Great Compassionate One, whose anniversary last year was marked by a similar occasion.

Those who are accustomed to indoor worship can have no idea of the sense of exaltation that comes on hearing the majestic message of the world's master-spirits given under the open sky to the accompaniment of the sounds of nature, and with the enduring hills as a background. Especially in the moonlight is the heart lifted high by the eternal mystery of the Beautiful into the "pure land" of the Lord Buddha—the Kingdom of God which is within.

It was a happy chance—although there is no chance—that brought Dr. and Mrs. James H. Cousins—who were recently entertained at the Boston Centre—to California in time for this event. Possibly, that Tuesday night there in the hills, they may have felt themselves transported to some ancient forest hermitage of India—the India they love and serve. At any rate, their great understanding of Hindu life, and their lovely Indian paintings conveyed both to Boston and the Ashrama a greeting from the Motherland.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

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JUNE, 1929

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*

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PRACTICE OF POISE

By Swami Paramananda

THE repose of the sage is not what the world calls repose. His repose is the result of his mental attitude. All creation could not disturb his equilibrium; hence his repose." Chuang Tzu gives in these words a very beautiful, a very true picture. The philosopher makes his mind the mirror for all reflection. That is why this Chinese seer, a little further on, gives still water as the symbol of mental equilibrium, poise and quietude. The average man thinks that he gains knowledge from the outside, through education perhaps, or through much learning; but the real secret is found within the person himself.

"When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

Here is a practice which will lead one to an attitude of poise and serenity. The ordinary human being, however, feels that it is almost a calamity to be alone. A man of thinking nature, on the other hand, looks upon it as a great blessing. It gives him the opportunity to order his mind and to rearrange his thoughts. For instance, a business man who has a great deal of accumulation, if he is going to accomplish anything, must put his house in order. This means that he will have to have a certain amount of time to himself. Same way it is with us when our inner life is in confusion. We need to reorganize it. But to do this it is necessary to go within—to have silence. Silent people—people who do not talk too much, who are not emotionally excitable—are very restful, not only to themselves but to others. They do not wear themselves out, and the reason for this does not lie in the physical, but in the province of psychology.

Sometimes we become interested in silence just from the point of view of health. We cannot, however, hold the body still, or have control over it, until we have gained control over the mind. There are certain thoughts which make us restless, and there are others which bring a soothing sense of calm to our entire being. When we are under the influence of such thoughts and feelings we are revived, we are re-made, our whole constitution seems remoulded.

We are apt to take the ideas belonging to the spiritual province as something vague and abstract; but they are not abstract; they have to be brought right down to this plane. Do not for a moment think that a person is going to become spiritual merely because he has a lot of books to read, or has joined a special cult, no matter how mysterious it may be. The mark of our progress is in our own life. If some one comes and tells you how far advanced he is, the only way you can find out about his advancement is to see him—to note his manners, his speech, his bearing, his poise—that is the first thing to do. When a person talks about his spiritual calm, about the peace, the joyousness, the sanctity of his life, and you find that he is excitable, is impatient, that he gets angry, it is a condemnation. He himself is his own enemy, his own opponent.

We are constantly fighting ourselves. It may seem very strange, that we are at war with ourselves; nevertheless it is true. When that war ceases, then the world cannot wage any more war against us. A very interesting parallel is given in the Hindu Scriptures. The Bhagavad-Gita says that a man who has perfect self-control is like unto a tortoise. A tortoise can withdraw itself so completely that even if you strike it with a hammer, you cannot make any impression upon it, because the shell protects it. Similarly, there are people in the world who, when you come to them with harsh words or unjust condemnation, instead of quarreling and fighting, seem to withdraw. That is the sign of wisdom. Many take this idea of non-resistance as something negative, just as they take the idea of poise, silence, or meditation as pertaining to negation—a state of idleness and unproductiveness where you think nothing and do nothing. A man cannot be without thought; either he goes to sleep, or he opens himself to some influence, some obsession. What we are considering is an entirely different thing. True meditation gives a greater power; it opens a new province whereto we can retire, and wherefrom we can draw physically, mentally and spiritually. That is the idea of poise, and we need it every hour of our life. Without it we are broken.

The man who is excitable, nervous, out of tune with himself, never accomplishes so much as does a calm and measured individual. And it is not only a question of accomplishment, but of self-preservation. There is a practical lesson here that we all need, a lesson that is interwoven with our inner life. Even when we do not take it from the spiritual point of view, we find its value. One who has acquired a certain amount of deeper insight, we see at once its influence upon him. He walks without making a noise; he talks without being harsh or offensive; his whole being becomes toned down. Let me relate this to your ordinary, everyday existence. You want to read something or converse with some one, but a child with uncontrolled nature is disturbing you by screaming, and talking loudly. In same way, there is an unruly child within us in the form of our whimsical mind, disturbing us constantly. We ignore it, however, because we think that the disturbance is coming from without, that it is others who are marring our peace. No one can do that. He who has made his inner contact, nothing can touch him. Vicious people may try to hurt him, but they cannot get at him because, by the unfoldment of his individual spiritual consciousness, he has put himself above all destructive elements.

Try to unfold this inner consciousness—it is something we can all do—but do not try to do it for effect, so that some one may say: "How poised that person is, how calm!" Do it for your own sake. Love of effect is a very petty thing. At first when you are told that you are spiritually advanced, that you are wonderful, it may interest you, but after a little while, when you have gained a certain amount of insight, these things seem distasteful—human praise and human blame no longer affect you in the least. Until we can reach the point where we can remain unruffled by praise and blame and all the sensations of life—good fortune and misfortune—we are always apt to be overthrown. Not to be tossed by circumstances is the greatest possible gain in individual life. The average man is often carried away by success. Sometimes he is literally exhausted through his elation. It is weakness to lack self-control in this way. It opens us to contrary influences. That same person, a little bit of ill luck, will cause him to be absolutely prostrated.

We believe in taking physical exercise in order to keep our body in tune. We also have to take a certain amount of mental exercise to keep our mind in tune. Poise does not come suddenly. Do not think that when people stand unmolested and unruffled that they have acquired that attitude all in a moment. It is a question of practice. Practice is everything. Do not, however, take the idea of practice so hard, and do not try to persuade yourself that you have not the time for it. We have the time, and we must take the time. We have time for everything else, for our physical necessities—for bathing, eating and sleeping. You may say, these are most needful things. It also is most needful that we tune our instrument, that we keep our mind and heart and all our faculties in such rhythm that we can accomplish the greatest amount without causing others any unhappiness or disturbance. These two results work together. A man who has found his poise not only preserves himself, but teaches others how they may preserve themselves. Such a man, an angry person may come in contact with him, may abuse and insult him, but when in spite of all this he remains calm and unruffled, this fact makes a tremendous impression on his assailant.

There are people who welcome adverse circumstances. That may sound peculiar to you, especially to those of you who have had New Thought training and are accustomed to praying for safety and prosperity. You may think it strange that a person should welcome adversity. But how can we ever know that we have gained inner poise, that we have any strength, until we meet with hard conditions? Without these we may become weakened by the soft things of life. Sometimes hard blows are just what we need to give us necessary lessons. They unfold us in extraordinary ways. Therefore wise men often welcome them, like a wrestler or an athlete who welcomes an opponent stronger than himself so that he can try out his own powers.

We cannot deny that there are certain elements in life which are disturbing, certain people who are annoying; but we must not let these things thwart us. We can easily magnify them and make them seem larger than they are. There are some who grow faint-hearted at the very thought of trouble, while others, not only never lose heart; they overcome all obstacles, even those which may seem insurmountable. There is tremendous psychology in the mental attitude. We can make things look much bigger than they are, and also we can diminish any difficulty, any danger, by our attitude toward it. This is the way we learn. Man has a mighty source of strength within him—an inexhaustible supply. Yet, whenever he is molested by life, he is apt to run outside for help. Excitable people always do that, and in their great haste they blunder again, and suffer. The other type—the reposeful, the meditative—whenever you strike at them, they go within. That is the first step toward spiritual unfoldment. Within is the safest place to seek our strength. There we always find something unshakable.

I have never met anyone who was spiritually great, or even great in the worldly way, who did not have control over his temper, who was not calm and serene. These are qualities which we see manifested as the result of a man's thought. It is thought which moulds one's conduct. We cannot think one thing and do another. We cannot be absorbed by all kinds of ignoble instincts, and evolve a beautiful, gentle, calm disposition. It is impossible. We have to turn to the more profound aspects of our life, and this the devotees call turning to God, and the philosophers call unfolding the soul-instinct. What they call it is not our concern. As soon as we make our mind—as the Chinese philosopher has said—like a body of still water, it will at once begin to reflect things clearly. All our quarrels will end; all our doubts will vanish, because our vision will no longer be distorted.

When the mind is disturbed and distracted, we can give to our friends, and to ourselves, a dozen reasons why we are in that excited condition; but this does not make us feel any better, and it does not save us from the results. Reasons we can dig out; the thing is, how may we go through these conditions without being touched by them? To turn our mind to that is a better practice. When we analyze, when we reflect, when we throw the light of wisdom on these trifling occurrences which disturb us and rob us of our dignity, how insignificant they seem. A person has called you a fool and quickly you lose your temper and do something that is foolish. The next moment you realize just how foolish it was. You might have ignored him, you might have left the place. There are many ways to avoid such things. You may say, "If only I had presence of mind!" You can have it; you can control yourself. The little analysis you make after a thing is done, you can learn to do before. That is the time to calculate.

Heat and cold, pleasure and pain, defeat and gain, these are disciplines that are constantly coming and going. Try to keep yourself the same under all these conditions. When you learn to walk in rhythm they do not bother you in the least. What a wonderful thought the Lord Sri Krishna gives in the Gita: All these varying sensations, these individual experiences, are the products, the direct results, of contact. You come in contact with some thing or person that awakens within you the feeling either of happiness or unhappiness. When the contact is broken, that feeling ends. All these sensations are born through contact with sense objects; they come and go. How wonderful it would be if we could learn this truth. You say, "We can write it down and keep it before us." The best place to keep it is in our heart. Try to realize it—that these are all transitory things, and that which seems so big and which causes us to feel so disturbed is only a passing cloud. The light will come. In rainy countries clouds gather; everything looks black, perhaps for days, and we think the sun is never going to come out. But it will shine again. Only for a moment, only for a little time, can the clouds hide the sun. Same way it is with our life. There are circumstances which seem to us very, very hard, and we feel almost defeated by them. Yet if we can remember the inevitable law of life, that all things come and go, that there is only one Abiding Principle—the Essence, the Truth, the God-part in man—then these things will cease to thwart us. This gives us our foundation, and we must have a foundation before we can acquire those instincts which we so admire.

Poise and dignity! How we look up to a person who has these qualities. They are inseparable, and we need them in every turn of life. Unless we have a calm spirit we cannot pray; we cannot meditate; we cannot find any light on our path. There is not one individual who can do without it. You want to maintain yourself; you want to save yourself from breakdown. Then do not wait until you have actually broken; practise poise now. You will be happier for it, and you will extend that happiness to your fellow beings. Happiness is the direct result of a reposeful mind, a calm, silent, sanctified consciousness. Happiness cannot abide in a restless heart. You say that your habit of life has carried you far from these ideals; that you cannot sit still, your mind cannot halt even for a moment. Again I say, practise. Do not be discouraged: practise by degrees. At first, to control the mind may seem like a very difficult task, but with practice it will become like your second nature. I have known people who could not sit quietly for a moment, who were not able to keep from moving constantly even in their sleep. But a little time changed all this.

Especially I remember a small boy of eleven who used to wink his eyes continuously, and was so restless that his mother became almost distracted. Just as an experiment I gave him a few things to do—nothing very mysterious—just some little simple practices, but they brought about a great transformation. He was like a different child; his health improved; he became more keen in his studies, and his whole character developed. That was the most wonderful thing, the influence on his character. Formerly he was sharp, impatient, angry. Sometimes he used to throw things at others, in moments of temper. But now everything was changed. You might have thought it was a miracle. Nature is a great miracle. When we know how to take with blending harmony what she is already giving us, already providing for us, we find that we can accomplish all we have thought of as miraculous. This body blossoms forth and this mind begins to draw from the reservoir of that great Intelligence. It all lies with the individual. Go to church as much as you want; have your particular chosen creed, but do not forget for a moment that you must have something to show in your own life. That means turning inwards, and we cannot turn inwards without finding something of value; without being transformed. It is a transformation. A weak person becomes strong; a restless person becomes calm; the unhappy soul becomes happy. It is the fruition—the direct fruition—of spiritual life and living.

All that we read in the sacred books in connection with St. Francis, how he tamed the robbers; in connection with Christ, how he controlled the turbulent spirits; and with

Buddha, how he overcame his enemies, are great illustrations of poise. Such master-spirits, when they are confronted with danger and difficulties, are not disturbed or fearful like ordinary people, because they have found the real basis of life, and that always sustains them. They stand like a rock, and their enemies become powerless. Poise is the greatest factor in human destiny. It is not something we can acquire through calculation, otherwise every man would be a sage or a saint. You have to make it your own. Religion is being and becoming. Therefore live so that by looking at your face, men shall know your religion, your faith, your life. Thus will your words scatter sparks of wisdom, and bring consolation to others.

We cannot give anything save what we have. If we have a peaceful heart, a serene mind, a calm and composed nature, we carry God's benediction wherever we go. And what a wonderful thing it is for every man and every woman to carry that! Do not think that the religious life is assigned merely to ministers, preachers and teachers. It is God's life. Every one of his children should exhibit it. Live it at home; live it in your business; live it in your church; only live it! It must become a living factor, for it is going to lay the foundation for world peace. It will dawn first in the individual heart; from there it will radiate until another heart becomes inspired, and another, and still another, until finally the whole world becomes bound by the thread of love. It is so beautifully given in the Lord's Song: "I am that thread upon which all these pearls (all these souls) are strung." We must, however, find the thread and realize that our part is to bind it together. The material is there. Do not think for a moment that we have to be like beggars—everything is already ours. We need only learn the art, and that lies in the stillness of the mind and soul.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

You cannot prevent the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you can prevent their building nests in your hair.
—Chinese Proverb

This monster must be vanquished, this seven-headed beast of self-love must be beheaded, in order to get up to the high mountain of peace. *—Michael de Molinos*

Speak with gentleness to him who has spoken brutally; it is the remedy which will calm his heart.
—Scribe Ani (Egyptian)

I saw the slow, unfailing plan of God, by which our habits may become our step-ladder to saintship.
—Frances Willard

O Soul, Soul, who art tost in cares where the means of escape are difficult, keep thyself up, and protect thyself by throwing the breast before the foe, and stand firmly near the enemy in ambush; and neither, when a victor, be openly elated, nor, when vanquished, fall down in the house and mourn. But neither joy too much in things of joy, nor be dispirited too much in the midst of ills; but understand what kind of measure keeps men (within bounds).
—Archilochus

Those who are at sea rest tho' the ship be in perpetual movement, and the needle is still true to the pole. Let us regard God alone in our actions; so shall we find interior rest in the most agitated life. *—St. Francis de Sales*

Know now and forever, that in the calm of the soul lies real knowledge, and from the divine tranquility of the heart springs power. *—From "Doctrine of the Heart."*

THE USE OF APPEARANCES

From the Discourses of Epictetus

That which is the most excellent and superior of all, the right use of appearances, is—as was right—the only thing which the gods have placed in our power; over other matters they have given us no control. But was this because they would not? I rather think that if they could they would have granted us power over these other things too; but they certainly could not. For, placed upon earth, and confined to such a body and to such companions, how was it possible that with respect to these things we should not be hindered by things without us?

But what says Zeus? "Epictetus, if it had been possible, I would have made your little body and possessions free, and not liable to hindrance. But now do not mistake. The body is not your own, but only finely tempered clay. Since, then, I could not do this for you, I have given you a certain portion of myself—the faculty, namely, of pursuing an object or avoiding it, of desire and aversion—in a word, the use of appearances. If you take care of this faculty, and consider that in its exercise lies all that is really your own, you will never be checked nor hindered. You will not groan, nor complain, nor flatter any one. How then!—do all these advantages seem small to you? 'Heaven forbid!' Be content with them then, and thank the gods."

But now, when it is in our power to be concerned with but one thing, and to attend to but one, we choose rather to be concerned with many, and to encumber ourselves with many—with body, property, brother, friend, child, and slave—and by this multiplicity of encumbrances we are burdened and weighed down. Thus, when the weather is not fair for sailing, we sit tormenting ourselves, and perpetually looking to see which way the wind blows. "It is from the north." But what difference does that make to us? "When will it blow from the west?" When the west wind itself, friend, or Aeolus, pleases. God has not made you dispenser of the winds, but Aeolus. What then is to be done? To make the best use of what is in our power, and take the rest as it happens. And how is that? As it pleases God. . . .

What, then, should we have at hand to help us upon such occasions? Why, what else but the knowledge of what is mine, and what not mine; of what is permitted me, and what is not.

Suppose I must die: must I die groaning, too? I must be fettered: must I also lament? I must be exiled: but what hinders me from departing smiling, cheerful, and serene?

On the other hand, I get the order: "Betray the secret." But this I will not do, for this is in my own power. "Then I will fetter you." What do you say, man? Fetter me? You may fetter my leg, but not Zeus himself can control my will. "I will throw you into prison." My body, you mean. "I will cut off your head." When did I tell you that I alone had a head that could not be cut off?

These things ought philosophers to study; these ought they daily to write, and in these to practise themselves. . . .

You journey to Olympia to behold the work of Phidias, and each of you thinks it a misfortune to die without a knowledge of such things. But when there is no need to travel, since one has the works of God before him wherever he happens to be, will you not desire to see and understand them? Will you never perceive what you are, nor for what you were born, nor why you received the faculty of sight? "But there are some things unpleasant and difficult in life." And are there none at Olympia? Are you not heated? Are you not crowded? Are you not without good conveniences for bathing? Are you not wet through when it rains? Do you not have to bear uproar and noise and other disagreeable things? But I suppose the comparison of these annoyances with the advantage of seeing so remarkable a sight enables you to support and endure them. Well, have you not received faculties by which you may support every event of life? Have you not received greatness of soul? Have you not received a manly spirit? Have you not received patience? What matters to me anything that happens while I have greatness of soul? What shall disconcert, or trouble, or appear grievous to me? Shall I not make use of my faculties for the purpose for which they were given me, instead of lamenting and groaning at what happens?

If what philosophers say of the kinship between God and men be true, what can one do but follow the example of Socrates, who, when asked of what country he was, never said that he was a citizen of Athens, or of Corinth, but of the world? For why do you say that you are of Athens, and not of that little corner of it only, where your body was laid at its birth? Is it not, evidently, from something more authoritative, which comprehends not only the corner and your whole family, but also the entire extent of that country from which the stock of your progenitors has been derived down to you, that you call yourself an Athenian, or a Corinthian?

He, then, who understands the administration of the world, and has learned that the greatest and most authoritative and most comprehensive of all commonwealths is this system of men and God, and that from Him are descended the seeds of being, not only to one's father and grandfather, but also to all things that are produced and born on earth, and especially to rational natures, since they alone are by nature qualified to have communication with the Deity, being connected with Him by reason—why may not such an one call himself a citizen of the world? Why not a son of God? And why shall he fear anything that happens among men? Shall kindred to Caesar, or any other of the great at Rome, enable a man to live secure, above contempt, and void of all fear whatever? And shall not the fact that God is our Maker, and Father, and Guardian free us from griefs and terrors?

One ought not to be unhappy on account of any one, but rather happy on account of all, and chiefly of God, who has constituted us for this purpose. What! did Diogenes love nobody—he who was so gentle and benevolent as cheerfully to undergo so many pains and miseries of body for the common good of mankind? Yes, he did love them. But how? As became a minister of Zeus, at once caring for men and obedient to God. Hence the whole earth, not any particular place, was his fatherland. When he was taken captive, he did not long for Athens and his friends and acquaintances there, but made himself acquainted with the pirates, and endeavored to reform them. And when he was at last sold, he lived at Corinth, just as before at Athens; and if he had gone to the country of the Perrhaebians, he would have done exactly the same. Thus is freedom acquired.

Hence he used to say: "Ever since Antisthenes made me free, I have ceased to be a slave." But how did Antisthenes make him free? Hear what he says: "He taught me what is my own, and what is not. Property is not my own: Kindred, domestics, friends, reputation, familiar places, manner of life—all belong to another." What is one's own then? "The use of appearances." He showed me that I possess this power free from hindrance or constraint; for no one can hinder me in its exercise, or force me to exercise it otherwise than I please. Who, then, after this, has any power over me? Philip, or Alexander, or Perdiccas, or the Persian king? How could they have it? For long before one can be subdued by a man he must be subdued by things. Whose slave, then, can he ever be whom neither pleasure, nor pain, nor fame, nor riches can subdue?

THREE POEMS

By Swami Paramananda

I.

My soul be thou patient with those who do
not understand;
Be thou loving with those who are harsh;
Be thou kind to those who inflict wounds;
Be thou tender with those who are in pain.
My soul be thou filled with gladness;
Be thou filled with faith,
And be thou filled with love!

II.

I come to this river-bank day after day
To wash this vestment of my heart.
If fortune ever helps me to make it spotless white,
I will dip it in the dye of His love.

III.

Hand of love will worship;
Heart of love will pray;
Mind of love will soar to the heights,
And eye of love will gaze.
Till hand and heart and mind and eye
All work as one for One.

LIFE, DEATH, AND SELF

By Makhdum-ul-Mulk

(An Indian Sufi living in the latter part of the 14th Century)

Seek no connection with the self, lest thou shouldst be affected with pride. . . . "Thou canst not reach Me, so long as 'thyness' inheres in thee; thou shalt reach Me only when thou quittest thy self." O brother, subdue thy desires with asceticism tempered by knowledge; cut off the head of the desire-nature with the sword of self-discipline, as advised by the Scriptures . . . and then put on the robe of Islam. If thou art really in earnest, tread upon thy life so dear to thee, and do not fear death; what follows is Life, through and through. "If thou dependest upon (bodily) life, thou wilt lag behind. Thou art Life in the world of Life alone. Grasp well the subtle fact—thou *art* That which thou seekest." The foremost duty of the seeker lies in seeing the Beloved as the only Life, and in eliminating the evil of his own separated existence.

He who is on good terms with the self is dead, though apparently living; he whose life is in God is really living, though apparently dead. Death is not of the body alone: the *inner* man may die in the same way as the *outer*. Men are perishing in the sea of desires. Their Saviours are the Prophets who help them to cross the sea of desires and merge in the Divine Unity. . . . The ungodly live in the form only, and are dead in the spirit, since true life consists in human nature responding to the Divine Life. On the other hand, "Those who have sacrificed themselves on the Path of God are not to be considered as dead, but as living with their Lord."

Freedom from self leads to freedom from all. So long as thou art bound to any of the lower qualities, thou art a slave. . . . The Path is a jealous master, and will not put up with any partner. So long as thou art a friend to self, thou art a stranger to God. Be then estranged from self that thou mayest unite with Him.

A RULE FOR NUNS—AND OTHERS

From the "Ancren Riwle"

[*The following article is composed of fragments of wisdom —sometimes consecutive, sometimes not—taken from that quaint book of spiritual counsel known as the "Ancren Riwle," which was written back in the 13th century by a Father of the church in England, at the request of three English anchoresses or feminine recluses. Although hundreds of years separate their times from ours, and though their chosen vocation is peculiarly alien to our modern thought, yet much of the advice tendered them as a guide to cloistered living, could be applied today with profit along any line of endeavor.*

The naivete of the chronicle, as well as its unconscious humour, lifts it above the dry-as-dust relics of the past, and gives to it that touch of humanness which makes 1300 and 1900 seem as "sisters under the skin."]

Ye, my dear sisters, have oftentimes importuned me for a Rule. There are many kinds of rules; but, among them all, there are two of which, with God's help, I will speak by your request. The one rules the heart and makes it even and smooth, without knot or wound-mark of evil or accusing conscience. This rule is always within you, and directs the heart. The other rule is all outward, and ruleth the body and the deeds of the body.

Ye should by all means, with all your might and all your strength, keep well the inward rule, and for its sake the outward. Now then, is it so that all anchoresses may well observe one rule? "All may and ought to observe one rule concerning purity of heart." This rule is framed not by man's contrivance, but by the command of God. Therefore, it ever is and shall be the same, and all men ought ever invariably to observe it. But all men cannot, nor need they, nor ought they to keep the outward rule in the same unvaried manner; nor is it instituted for anything else but to serve the internal law. Wherefore this rule may be changed and varied according to every one's state and circumstances. For some are strong; some are weak; some are learned, and some are not; some are old and ill favored, of whom there is less fear; some are young and lively, and have need to be more on their guard. Every anchoress must, therefore, observe the outward rule according to the advice of her confessor.

Whoso undertaketh anything, and promises to God to do it as His command, binds herself thereto, and sinneth mortally in breaking it, if she brake it wilfully and intentionally. If, however, she does not vow it, she may, nevertheless, do it, and leave it off when she will, as of meat and drink, abstaining from flesh or fish, and all other such things relating to dress, and rest, and hours, and prayers. Therefore, my dear sisters, that which I shall write to you in the first, and especially in the last part of your book, you should not vow it, but keep it in your heart, and perform it as though you had vowed it.

If any ignorant person ask you of what order you are, as you tell me some do, who strain at the gnat and swallow the fly, answer and say that ye are of the order of St. James, who was God's Apostle. He saith what religion is, and what right order: "Pure religion and without stain is to visit and assist widows and fatherless children, and to keep himself pure and unstained from the world." The latter part of his saying relates to anchorites. "To keep himself pure and unstained from the world." Herein is religion, and not in the wide hood, nor in the black, nor in the white, nor in the gray cowl. There, however, where many are gathered together, they should, for the sake of unity, make a point of sameness of clothes, and of other outward things, that the outward sameness may denote the sameness of one love and of one will.

"With every kind of watchfulness, daughter," said Solomon the wise, "guard well thy heart, for in it is the life of the soul, if it is well governed." The wardens of the heart are the five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smelling, and every member's feeling; whoever guards these well doth Solomon's command. Nothing escapes from a man's control so soon as his heart; David, God's prophet, said upon a certain occasion: "My heart forsakes me." And where did it break away from the holy king David? God knows, at the window of the eye.

Wherefore, my dear sisters, love your windows as little as possible; and see that they be small—the parlor's smallest and narrowest. When you have to go to your parlor window, learn from your maid who it is that is come; and when you must needs go forth, make the sign of the cross carefully and go forth in the fear of God to a priest. Hear his words and sit quite still, that, when he parteth from you, he may not know either good or evil of you. Some one is so learned and of such wise speech, that she would have him to know it, who sits and talks to him and gives him word for word, and becomes a preceptor, who should be an anchoress, and teaches him who is come to teach her; and would, by her own account, soon be celebrated and known among the wise. Known she is well; for, from the very circumstance that she thinketh herself to be reputed wise, he understands that she is a fool; for she hunteth after praise and catches reproach. For, at last, when he is gone away, he will say, "This anchoress is a great talker."

Wherefore, let an anchoress, whatsoever she be, keep silence as much as ever she can and may. Let her not have the hen's nature. When the hen has laid, she must needs cackle. And what does she get by it? Straightway comes the chough and robs her of her eggs. The poor pedlar makes more noise to cry his soap than a rich mercer all his valuable wares. "Wheat is holy conversation." She grinds grit who prates idly. The two cheeks are the two grindstones; the tongue is the clapper. Look, dear sisters, that your cheeks never grind anything but soul food, nor your ears hear anything but soul heal. Let every one attend to his own business and not meddle with that which is another's. Many a man thinketh that he doeth that well which he doeth very ill. Many keep in their words to let more out, as men do water at the mill-dam; and so did Job's friends that were come to comfort him; they sat still full seven nights; but, when they had all begun to speak, they never knew how to stop their importunate tongues.

On the other hand, "Long silence and well kept urgeth the thoughts up toward heaven;" just as you may see the water when men dam it and stop it before a spring, so that it cannot flow downward, then is it forced to climb again upward. In this manner must all ye check your words, and restrain your thoughts, as you would wish that they may climb and mount up toward heaven. "Therefore," saith St. James, "if any man thinketh that he is relgious, and bridleth not his tongue, his religion is false." He saith right well, for a bridle is not only in the mouth of the horse, but part of it is upon his eyes, and part of it on his ears. But the iron is put in the mouth and on the light tongue; for there is most need to hold when the tongue is in talk, and has begun to run. For we often intend, when we begin to speak, to speak little, and well placed words; but the tongue is slippery, for it wadeth in the wet, and slides easily on from few to many words. With the flitting word, the heart flits away, so that long time thereafter it cannot rightly collect itself again. She who wishes God's ear to be nigh her tongue, must retire from the world, else she may cry long ere God hear her. Whoso is very quiet and keeps long silence may hope with confidence, that when she speaks to God He will hear her. She may also hope that, through her silence, she shall also sing sweetly in heaven.

Against all evil speech, my dear sisters, stop your ears. All that from which no good cometh is idle and needless; "and of such speech," saith our Lord, "shall every word be reckoned and account given," why the one spoke it, and the other listened to it. Backbiters, who bite other men behind, are of two sorts. The former cometh quite openly, and speaketh evil of another. But the latter proceedeth in a quite different manner, and is a worse enemy than the other; yet under the cloak of a friend. He casteth down his head, and begins to sigh before he says anything, and makes sad cheer, and moralizes long without coming to the point, that he may be the better believed. But when it all comes forth, then it is yellow poison. "Alas and alas!" he saith, "woe is me, that he or she hath got such a reputation. Enough did I try, but it availed me nothing, to effect an ammendment here. Grieved and sorry I am that I must say it; but indeed it is so." These are the devil's serpents which Solomon speaketh of.

We should sooner die than commit any sin, and is it not a great sin to cause men to say, "This anchoress is dainty, and she asks much?" And it is still worse if they may say that she is a grumbler, and undisciplined, domineering and difficult to please. If she were living in the world, she would sometimes have to be content with less, and worse. It is very unreasonable to come into a religious house willingly and freely, to seek therein ease and mastery, and more deference than she might have had properly enough in the world. Think then, O anchoress, of what thou didst intend and seek, when thou didst forsake the world, at thy entrance into the cloister.

My dear sisters, in like manner as you guard well your senses externally, so above all things see that ye be gentle within, and mild and meek, affectionate and kind-hearted, and patient of any word—if ony one speaks ill of you—and of any deed—if any one harms you—lest you lose all. While the heart is inwardly boiling with wrath, there is no just decision, nor any right judgment. "Anger is a sorceress," for it bereaveth and depriveth man of his right understanding and transforms him from man into beast's nature. An angry woman is a she-wolf. As long as anger is in a woman's heart, though she say her versicles, and her hours, and her paternosters, and her aves, yet she doth nothing but howl.

Here now, are many sorts of remedies against anger, and many comforts and divers helps. What is a word but wind? Too feebly is she strengthened whom a wind's puff of a word may cast down. And again, doth she not show that she is dust, and an unstable thing, who, with a little wind of a word, is immediately blown up and provoked. The same puff of his mouth, if thou cast it under thy feet, would bear thee upward toward the blessedness of heaven.

True anchoresses are compared to birds, for they leave the earth; that is, the love of all earthly things; and, through yearning of heart after heavenly things, fly upward toward heaven. And, although they fly high, with high and holy life, yet they hold the head low, through meek humility, as a bird flying boweth down its head.

Job said, "Lord, Thou hast made a too heavy weight to give wings to the soul;" that is, the heavy flesh which draweth it downward; but through the nobleness of the soul the flesh shall become full light, yea, lighter than the wind, and brighter than the sun, if it follow the soul here, and draw her not too strongly into its own base nature. Dear sisters, for the love of Him whom the soul resembles, honor her, and suffer not the base flesh to get too much dominion over her; for she is here in a strange land, pent in a prison and shut up as in a dungeon, nor is it easily seen of what dignity she is, nor how noble is her nature, nor how great she shall be in her own kingdom. The flesh is here at home, as earth upon earth; and therefore, it is brisk and bold, as it is said, "the cock is brave on his own dunghill." Alas! it hath too much power over many. But an anchoress, as I have said, ought to be all spiritual if she wishes to fly well, as a bird that hath little flesh and many feathers.

Hear now, my good sisters, how evil it is to be vain and boast of good deeds, and how good it is to conceal our good works, and to fly by night, like the night fowl, and to gather in the darkness, that is, privately and secretly, food for the soul. Night I call privacy. This night ye may have at all times of the day; so that all the good that you do be done as it were by night and in darkness, out of the sight and hearing of men. How good a thing it is to be alone is manifested and shown both in the Old Testament and also in the New. Our dear Lady, did she not lead a solitary life? The Saviour Himself, as Holy Scripture saith, when He wished to be much in prayer, fled not only other men, but even

His holy disciples, and went up into the hills alone: for an example to us, that we should retire by ourselves and mount up with Him upon hills; that is, to meditate on heavenly things, and leave low beneath us all earthly thoughts, while we are engaged in prayer.

Let not any one of remarkably pious life think that she may not be tempted. The good, who have reached a high degree of virtue, are more tempted than the frail; for the greater and higher the hill is, there is the more wind upon it. Pride, envy, wrath, anxiety about worldly things, listless indolence, and covetousness of wealth—these are the wounds of the heart, and that which emanates from them immediately giveth a death blow, unless it be remedied. The remedy of pride is humility; of envy, love to one another; of wrath, patience; of indolence, reading, and various kinds of work, and spiritual consolation; the remedy of covetousness is contempt of earthly things; of avarice, liberality. The remedy for envy, I said, was love to one another, and doing them good, and good will, where the ability to do is wanting. So great efficacy hath love and good will that it maketh the good which it doth to another our own as well as his. I firmly believe that neither carnal nor spiritual temptation shall ever master thee if thou art kind-hearted, and humble, and meek, and lovest so sincerely all men and women and especially anchoresses—thy dear sisters—that thou art as sorry for their evil, and glad of their good, as of thine own: desire that all who love thee, love them as well as thee, and comfort them as well as thee. If thou hast a knife or a garment, food or drink, scroll or book, or anything that would benefit them, desire that thou hadst it not, provided that they had it.

The remedy for indolence is spiritual joy, and the consolation of joyous hope from reading and holy meditation.

St. Jerome saith, "Let holy reading be always in thy hand. Sleep may fall upon thee as thou lookest thereon, and the sacred page meet thy drooping face;" and thus long and intently must thou read. Everything, however, may be overdone. Moderation is always best.

Men fence around with thorns young trees, lest beasts should gnaw them while they are tender. Ye are young trees planted in God's orchard. Thorns are the hardships, and it is necessary for you that ye be fenced around with them. Be glad if you are little spoken of, and if ye are disesteemed. With these two things be ye encompassed. Ye ought to let no evil word proceed from you any more than from the dead. And be glad in your heart if ye suffer insolence from Slurry, the cook's boy, who washeth dishes in the kitchen. Nothing is ever so hard that love doth not make tender, and soft, and sweet. I think we are now come to the seventh part which is all of love, which maketh a pure heart. Pureness of heart is the love of God only. In this is the whole strength of all religious professions, and the end of all religious orders. They who love most shall be most blessed; not they who lead the most austere life, for love outweigheth this. Love is heaven's steward, on account of her great liberality, for she retains nothing for herself, but giveth all that she hath, and even herself, otherwise God would not esteem any of the things that were hers. This love is the rule which regulates the heart. This rule is the lady or mistress. All the others serve her. I make little account of them provided this be worthily kept.

Ye shall eat no flesh nor lard except in great sickness; or whosoever is infirm may eat potage without scruple. Fast no day upon bread and water, except ye have leave.

Desire not to have the reputation of bountiful anchoresses, nor, in order to give much, be too eager to possess more. Greediness is the root of bitterness; all the boughs that spring from it are bitter. From a good friend take whatever you have need of when she offereth it to you, but for no invitation take anything without need, lest ye get the name of gathering anchoresses.

Ye shall not possess any beast, my dear sisters, except only a cat. An anchoress that hath cattle appears, as Martha was, a better housewife than anchoress.

Be never idle. From idleness ariseth much temptation of the flesh. Iron that lieth still soon gathereth rust; and water that is not stirred soon stinketh.

Ye shall not send, nor receive, nor write letters without leave.

Ye shall have your hair cropped four times a year to disburden your head.

Between meals, do not munch fruit or anything else; and drink not without leave.

In this book read every day, when ye are at leisure; for I hope that if ye read it often, it will be very beneficial to you, through the grace of God, or else I shall have ill employed much of my time. God knows, it would be more agreeable to me to set out on a journey to Rome, than to begin to do it again.

May the one Almighty God keep you under His protection! May He give you joy and comfort, my dear sisters, and for all that ye endure and suffer for Him may He never give you a less reward than His entire self.

As often as ye read anything in this book, greet the Lady with an Ave Mary for him who made this rule, and for him who wrote it, and took pains about it. Moderate enough I am who ask so little.

Character is simply habit long continued.—*Plutarch*

SANTA TERESA'S RULE

(Lines found in her prayer-book after her death)

Let nothing disturb thee,
Let nothing affright thee—
All passeth away;
God only shall stay.
Patience wins all:
Who hath God needeth nothing,
For God is his all.

I am borne down not with the sense of annihilation, but with the vastness of life, and the imminence of things spiritual. I *know* from something beyond and out of myself, that we are now but dying to live, that there is no death, which is but as a child's dream in a weary night.

—*William Sharp*

CHILDREN OF THE VALLEY*

By Oscar MacMillan Buck

We of the West, claiming to represent the Christ, have broken down where Jesus was strongest, where Jesus was irresistable—in *Jivanmukti* (liberation), in the vitality of His sense of God. Our shuttle does not go full length on the one side, and we weave but half a pattern. We are doing community service without God-intoxication. We have reversed the Commandments: first and foremost thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (the Golden Rule), and the second is like unto it: thou shalt love the Lord thy God—if thou canst. We are trying to love our neighbor without the four-ply love of God to give it significance and passion. We are children of the valley, and know little of the power that is gathered upon the mountain. Worship is formal and aesthetic, but not creative. We go to the work of the day without the prayer of the dawn. We are brothers of men, but not sons of God. We have explored the "cup of cold water," but not "in the name of a disciple." We know little of the "well of water springing up into eternal life," from which the cups of cold water should be drawn.

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*From "Our Asiatic Christ." Harper & Brothers.

We have come ministering, having read the parable of the Good Samaritan for our technique. But in this parable Jesus teaches whom to serve, not how to serve. We have never read, or never comprehended, Jesus' technique of service: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God and goeth unto God . . . took a towel and girded himself." (John 13:3, 4). The towel and the basin of water were shot through with the eternal and the universal. It was no ordinary washing; it became a sacrament.

We have come as Martha, not as Mary rising to serve. . . . We have thought that we were builders of the Kingdom, and we rush about with this tool and that. "We still believe mainly in fuss and noise and crowding and organization and machinery. If things drag, we evolve some other type of meeting, add one more to the already deafening intricacy of whirling wheels. And when it too is whirling with the rest, we feel more happy. There may be no spiritual outcome whatsoever, but we are pleasantly tired, and there is a wind blowing in our faces, and so we have the sense something is being done. So long as we are hot and perspiring, are talking and meeting, are bustled and rushed, we feel that things are happening, for we trust in efficiency and busyness, and a certain material capacity, far more than in the Holy Ghost; energy and organization—that, we feel, is what will bring us through." By boosting and boasting we have thought to bring in the Kingdom of God.

RIGHT REMEMBRANCE

A Parable by Sri Ramakrishna

Once upon a time, conceit entered the heart of Narada—who was known as "The Divine Sage," and was said to have the power of passing at will between heaven and earth—and he thought there was no greater devotee than himself. Reading his heart, the Lord said: "Narada, go to such and such a place; there you will find a great *Bhakta* (devotee), make acquaintance with him; he is my true lover." Narada went there and found an agriculturist who rose early in the morning, pronounced the name of God once, and, taking his plow, went out and tilled the ground the whole day. At night he went to bed after pronouncing once more the Name of the Lord. Narada said within himself, "How can this rustic be a lover of God? I see him busily engaged in worldly duties, and he has no signs of a pious man about him."

Then Narada, going back to the Lord, said what he thought of his new acquaintance. The Lord said: "Narada, take this cup of oil, go around the city, and come back with it; but beware, that not a drop of it falls!"

Narada did as he was told, and, on his return, he was asked: "Well, Narada, how many times didst thou remember me in thy walk around the city?"

Narada said: "Not once, my Lord. For how could I when I had to watch this cup brimful of oil?"

The Lord said: "This one cup of oil did so divert thy attention that thou didst forget me altogether; but look at that rustic who, carrying the mighty load of a family, still remembers me twice in the day."

Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.—*Psalms*

REPORT

Swami Paramananda passed the month of May at Ananda Ashrama, California, arriving there on May Day, and leaving on May 19th. During that period the most notable event was the anniversary of the founding of the Ashrama, which really fell on April 26th, but which was postponed to Sunday, May 5th, so that the Swami could be present.

In the year 1925, when the Ashrama was only two years old, the Swami marked the day by the opening of a sylvan auditorium—an open-air temple—up one of the canyons immediately back of where the Temple of the Universal Spirit now stands. That was a happy occasion, and all were charmed with the woodland calm of this natural sanctuary. In the years that followed, however, it fell into disuse, owing to the fact that the trees were not placed in a position to throw shade over the congregation at the time of the Services. The canyon gradually reclaimed the cleared space, and the very entrance became overgrown.

It was to this quiet retreat that the Swami went with one of his men workers on May 3rd, the Friday after his arrival. His eye appraised the old setting, but, just beyond, he saw a portion of canyon, tree-encircled, shielded from the sun at all hours, "A very school of peace," whose only draw-back was a gully from seven to ten feet deep, and about sixty feet long. He turned to his worker:

"Do you think you could fill in that gully, and get this pleace ready for Services on Sunday, that is, day after tomorrow?"

"It is a tremendous job," said the worker, "but of course I'll try."

Then the forces of the Ashrama were called on and concentrated upon the task in hand. There was perfect co-operation—perfect harmony—with the result that on Sunday people wound their way up a leafy path to what would have been a "sacred wood" to the Greeks—a cool, dim fane, brooded over by the hush of Nature which was broken only by the sound of a falling leaf, or the call of a bird; and by the hush of God which no bird-song or leaf-sound could break. And there, beneath the century old oaks, the Swami held two Services, one at 11 in the morning, and one at 3:30 in the afternoon, giving voice to the sanctified spirit of the place, although, as he said, it seemed as though no words were needful. There were none who did not feel the appeal of this new out-of-door shrine, and even members well along in years declared they would have walked much further gladly for the sake of such a goal.

The remainder of the Swami's sojourn at the Ashrama was uneventful save for a pleasant motor trip to the Ojai Valley, where he and Gayatri Devi were the luncheon guests of Mr. J. Krishnamurti, head of the Order of the Star in the East, whom they heard speak, later on in the afternoon, at a Star Camp Conference. A few days following, Mr. Krishnamurti came, with several of his associates, and lunched with the Swami at the Ashrama, remaining several hours.

The Swami arrived in Boston on May 23rd to be greeted by a heat wave which wilted, but did not greatly discourage his congregations—Sunday Services were well attended while the Thursday dinners proved as ever popular.

Srimati Gayatri Devi, who conducts Services and Classes at the Ashrama during the Swami's absence, has been in great demand as a speaker before various clubs and organizations, such as the Los Angeles City Club where, at one of their dinners, she addressed the guests on Indian Womanhood; and the Canadian Women's Club, where her words on the same theme drew forth warm enthusiasm from the large and representative audience gathered to hear her.

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VOLUME XVIII NUMBER 6

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

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JULY, 1929

MASTERY and SAMAHDI

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall.*

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MASTERY AND SAMADHI

By Swami Paramananda

(A combination of two Addresses delivered at the Vedanta Centre, Boston)

Let us lift our thoughts and prayers to the One Infinite,
All-seeing, All-beneficent, All-loving Spirit of the universe.
Let us open our hearts and the avenues of our soul, that we may inhale the life-giving, the blissful breath of that Infinite Spirit; that our body, mind, and heart may be in unison to sing the rhythmic hymn of life.
May He, who is the Father and Mother of us all, protect us and shield us, and bestow upon us His abiding blessing.
Peace, Peace, Peace be unto us, and to all living beings.

GOD is love—all love. In Him there is no room for hate. Man also can be all love. And as he learns to partake of that all-lovingness and all-loveliness—becoming more like the Incarnate Spirit of love—his ills will vanish. That is the law of fulfillment. You can reflect upon this as much or as little as you feel inclined to do. It is related to my theme, "Samadhi," or, as the Western mind would call it, "Superconsciousness"—supreme communion with the Divine.

Do not think, as many from the Occident do, that Samadhi means merely a passive, negative state in which a human being is more dead than he is alive. There are two poles of existence which seem alike. There is the extreme dullness which comes upon a man when he is overwhelmed with ignorance and inertia, and there is the condition of one who has become so tranquil that nothing can shake him. Outwardly these two states resemble each other, but there is a vast difference between them. The one renders a man incapable of doing anything; the other means that he has transcended the consciousness of the flesh, has risen above the nervous strain, the restlessness of life, and has become a channel for the Divine. The first man, if he is insulted, does not resist; he has not the power; he is too full of heaviness. The second man likewise cannot be moved by his enemies, but it is because he has not a speck of anger or resentment in him. He is like a still lake. It is a question of the quality of the soul. That infinite, unbroken calmness we cannot fathom. And do not think for a moment that India has any exclusive right to it. We find records of it both in the East and in the West. In the life of St. Francis his disciples report that one time when he was standing, lost in meditation, he became suddenly transfixed. This was true also of other great saints and mystics. Concerning Sri Ramakrishna, we read that once when he was in this ecstatic condition, an enemy, who did not believe in his sincerity, put a live charcoal on his flesh, but it did not bring him back to consciousness; he was unrelated to the body.

What it means, what it can mean, we are not able to fathom. That is why the Hindus, in their great flight of spiritual reasoning, have said that it is beyond mind and speech. I give you this background that you may better understand. A saint or a seer will go without food, clothes —everything—but he will not live without this spiritual sustenance, this communion by which he realizes the true entity of Godhead. The Buddhists call it Nirvana, which unfortunately has been translated as extinction. It does mean extinction—the extinction of grief, of greed, of jealousy, and hatred. These are wiped out in that blessed state where all sorrow is transcended. Samadhi means the transcending of sorrow. No intellectual flight can give it to us. We win it only as we learn the art of contemplation or communion.

The first step is to silence the feverish restlessness within us and learn to withdraw the mind from nonessentials, so that we no longer notice or remember the petty things of life. Now we are watching every detail, and this creates nervousness and despondency. Our mind is like a bit of cloth dyed with many colors—black, red, yellow. But we must keep on washing it in the waters of meditation until it becomes like a white sheet. Then we can dip it in the dye of that great love which never knows any hate—the love of Christ, of Buddha, of St. Francis.

The thing is, how to evolve this pure state of consciousness; in this world of many, how to find the One. It has been called the mystic stillness: he who attains it becomes transfixed in his purpose. Hatred, anger, nothing can reach him as he sits there in the Buddha posture—the posture of transcendent bliss. You know how it is with the bees: they always make a terrible buzzing till they have found the heart of the flower; then they grow silent. Same way it is with us. When we touch the Essence, all the noise, all the restlessness cease. We become quiet. But that quietness is not of death, and its expression is joy. What would you not give for such an experience? Yet it is yours; you have the power to attain it. It does not, however, come mechanically or from the outside. You are the creator of your own bondage. God has given you this beautiful mind with which to think the most constructive thoughts. You can become the voice of the Saviour. From you can flow into this world light, all love, and rhythm. Also, with this same mind you can revolve round and round in chaos.

We read a great deal today about cosmic consciousness; sometimes people say they have taken a course in it, as if they could buy it from the market at a certain price. It cannot be bought or sold. I hesitate to speak of these things; they sound so cheap. We thought that we had a beautiful philosophy, but it has become like a trademark used by everybody. Such words as Yoga, Samadhi, Superconsciousness have been desecrated by wrong ideas. In the papers every day we read of men who advertise themselves as Yogis or Masters. What is a Master? Who is a Master? You have heard stories about them, you have read books, and these have stimulated your thoughts and fancies. Some of you, perhaps, have come here with the idea of learning something extraordinary. But no matter how you may have come, the Truth must be given in its naked beauty whether you accept it or not.

Right here let me tell you that if you want to arrive at anything fundamental, you must know how to discriminate between spiritual mastery and jugglery. India, through her age-long tradition, has learned to differentiate between these two. There are jugglers on Indian streets who can make a mango tree grow out of the dust. They can even give you fruit from that tree. They can turn a coin into a scorpion. We who are born and brought up on that soil are amused. We pay them a little money, but we do not think that these things are miraculous or have any spiritual flavor, and we are careful not to let such people cross our threshold, which is sacred; they must stay in the space outside. The sanctuary is for the Master. You may ask, "How shall we know when that which is spiritual or divine comes our way?" The real thing is self-evident, like the sun. When the sun shines in the morning does it require a torch or anyone to point to it and say, "See, it is the sun!"? The Sun of Truth shines with its own effulgence, and we find it evidenced in the life of the Master-Spirit. Christ, even when He performed miracles, asked for no recognition. He did not say, "Go and tell people"; He said, "Tell no man." He did not demand, "Be grateful to me," but, "Give water to the thirsty."

The true Master is one who has conquered hatred, envy, pride—those evils which haunt the world and lead it into slavery. Whether he performs miracles or not is of no consequence. One time a disciple came to the Lord Buddha and spoke of performing miracles, thinking it would bring him into power and eminence. But the Lord told him that when a selfish, self-seeking man forgets himself and turns to the life of holiness, he performs the only miracle worthy of the name.

Without working, we want the honor and the recognition. There was once a Swami who was instructing a pupil in the life of discipleship—the life of obedience and service. The pupil listened very intently as the teacher described to him the duties he must perform in order to purify himself and overcome his imperfections. Finally he said, "And what does the teacher do?" "He receives the service of the students," replied the Swami, "and helps them with his wisdom." "Then let me be the teacher!" the student exclaimed.

Every one would like to have more magnetism, the perfection and beauty of the rose. We long for health and happiness; we desire to be a power—to stand out from others because of our radiance. This, however, we cannot do till our nature has unfolded. Christ spoke emphatically and constantly to His disciples: First seek ye the Kingdom of Truth; all other things will be added unto you. Yet for two thousand years His followers have tried to reverse the order. It is a strange dilemma.

You may say, "You are Oriental, what do you know of practical action?" I have lived among you all these years; I ought to know what is practical. Is there nothing practical except machines and things that man can manufacture? Is it not practical to think and aspire for a high ideal in order that one's life may be enriched and may enrich others? Or is it only practical to try to take advantage of some one, to live the life of shrewdness and competition with its mad rush and haunting fear? The world teaches us that the Kingdom of God should be kept for old age; that we should seek everything else first and leave that for the last. Let a man save his money, and then, if he has time, think of spiritual things. Material life, we are told, is definite; Kingdom of God is indefinite. It is not indefinite. Is the soul an indefinite quantity? Shall we have no faith in it? Is God indefinite? All these things that we hold as casual are the basic principles of life.

If I tell you that by your love you must overcome hatred and anger, you will say, "Impossible! It is natural for me to be that way." A Master-Spirit will tell you, "It is unnatural for man to be angry or hateful. He is born to conquer his nature, not to follow on like a slave." Here is the starting point. And how should we start? Not with aggression—"I am going to possess!"—like Alexander the Great. Kings, tyrants, cruel men of power ultimately perish, and cause many to perish with them; they do not live. But the gentle Christ, the Buddha, St. Francis the mystic, they live, and their lives endure. Men want to have all the glory that these great ones had and, at the same time, all the earthly joys. They desire to find an intellectual way to worship God and Mammon together. But there is no system to cover both.

We think, "If I give myself to higher thought, I shall starve." It is a false notion and shows lack of faith. What does it profit a man to be absorbed all the time in aches, pains, worries, incomes, and problems of the flesh? Man is built after God's image, but he is all the time thinking of that which does not pertain to God. How harsh, ugly, and dissonant a person seems when in a fit of anger: he is not himself; he is more like a brute. We become degraded when we do not follow the path of the Master. Lip praise —I follow Master Jesus, Lord Buddha, this one, or that— does not suffice. We do not follow them at all unless we walk in their footsteps and live the life according to their precepts. What did Christ say? "Not those who call me 'Lord, Lord!' but those who do the will of my Father . . ." This doing the will of the Father requires courage. But we can do it. There is no happiness in slavery.

The word "Master" is a beautiful word. We find it in all the great religions of the world. By it I do not mean merely one who gathers around him a few disciples; I mean a Master of wisdom unshaken by anger or adversity. If I were to draw his picture, it would represent majesty—the storm enveloping him—stoned, perhaps, as the Buddha was stoned, yet standing like a rock of strength. Man has not the power to overthrow such a one. Sankara, the great monistic teacher of India, has given a beautiful definition: "That man is indeed a saint, a benefactor, who has so transformed himself that he remains upon this earth like the season spring." You know how spring transforms everything. It touches the earth, and the life that is latent there bursts forth. It is the quality of spring to produce new life, energy, and joy. So a poet of India describes a real Master as one who, wherever he goes, brings forth fresh hope, aspirations, and blessings. Is this the mastery you aspire for, or do you merely desire a knowledge of jugglery?

I have nothing to do with those who seek to sell spirituality for money advanced. Suppose I knew how to teach you to read somebody's thoughts, I would not. You would be tormented by such knowledge. You would be a most miserable person. The thoughts of others are sometimes very unwholesome. I know you are eager for spiritual advancement. It doesn't, however, come suddenly. It may seem to do so in the case of some individual, but look into his soul and see all the yearning, the sincerity, the whole-hearted devotion that have made him ready for it. If any one comes with aggressive spirit—vain, conceited, arrogant—and says, "I can teach you; I am a great Master!" be sure he is nothing. He is worse than nothing. He brings disaster.

When His enemies were persecuting Him, could not Christ have prayed, "O Lord, protect me, and slay these people!"? His disciples wanted Him to do so. The Lord Buddha, when his friends sought to protect him from those who were seeking to harm him, replied, "Hatred is never conquered by hatred at any time; it is conquered by Love." If we talk of love and think of hate, if we smile when we feel like frowning, where is the flavor? There is no religion in that. What is religion? Do you suppose that God is a respecter of creeds and dogmas, that He loves this church more than that one? What are these things to Him? The deciding factor lies within man's own heart. You may find a humble creature becoming a great power. India, even today, knows how to value spiritual excellence. There, when men seek for a Master they do not look for him in palaces or in places of ostentation. He has no signs or allurements to attract them. It is their spiritual intuition that must lead them to where he is, perhaps in some silent corner where ordinarily they would not think of going.

Today, if we were brought face to face with the Christ, how many of us would recognize Him? Years ago in Italy I saw a cartoon made by a Frenchman. It showed Christ come back into this present world. He goes to the church which bears His name, but the doors are locked. Open the door to a beggar? The bishops and dignitaries are too busy; they have no time for an ordinary man of no affairs. He goes into the street and appeals to the passers-by, but men are too absorbed in their life of poverty and struggle. They do not hear His voice. Finally the artist takes Him weeping into the wilderness.

You may say, "That would not be so now; we would have the eyes to see Him." So long as we are the slaves of passion and anger, envy, jealousy, and all this pettiness, we shall not have the light to recognize the Master either within us or without us. How many of us have learned to remain tranquil when hate is turned against us? Our natural impulse is to hate more. That is not the Christ teaching, or any spiritual teaching in the world. What shall it profit a man if he has his dogmas, his bibles, the weight of creed, and lacks real spiritual vision? What shall it profit him to have all the rush and roar of modern machinery if he is without the deeper instincts? It will only crush him in its toils.

Therefore—I am appealing to you in conclusion—look within and more within your own soul. We are given a divine birthright as our heritage, but we must live by it; we must plan our life in accordance with its great principles. I cannot teach you anything new. You have not begun to accept the things you already know. Take one single divine text and follow it; it will become your saving grace and the saving grace of others. You may complain of your surroundings: "This person annoys me; in this environment I cannot concentrate or have any peace." Do not let adverse circumstances cause you to lose your opportunity. They will not last. Make your seat firm. Do not let anything unsettle you, or convince you that you cannot accomplish your purpose. Seek to shape your life after the image of your Ideal. The Master-Spirits of the world gained their control in the midst of just such conditions. Grow into their likeness and you will become an example for your fellow men. The greatest lesson we learn from them is not so much what they teach us through their words as through the hope and faith they kindle in our soul. A man has perhaps fallen in despair. He says, "I do not believe in myself or in God." Can you not picture the Christ coming down and lifting that man, making him feel that there is something in him worth while just because such a great one trusts him? Think what it would mean if we could follow the trend of that teaching! So many people are suffering all around us—are on the verge of drowning. We can lift them up. But we must have the strength or we, too, shall be drowned. Not secondhand strength; we ourselves must possess it.

Let us first overcome our own shortcomings—let us *be* something! There is glory in being. This teaching, if it gives us anything, gives us the stimulus to be. Man is a direct descendant of the Infinite, the Almighty. This brings a positive force which, when we are able to unveil it, to manifest it, transforms our life. "I am a child of God!" Apply this, but never forget what that "I" means. If you rise up with condescension or aggression, you do not know the significance of your own entity. "Ye who love and serve without thought of self are blessed." What a mighty soul it is that asks nothing, but is willing to give all. If today you do not feel inclined to seek such mastery, wait till you are ready. Do not, however, have false ideals, or put degraded value on spiritual grandeur.

People who talk about attaining Samadhi and how much they know of it prove that they have not found it. He who has really attained it cannot speak about it. It is the inner life that counts. Till we can unfold that and live close to it, we cannot understand the higher conscious mind, nor what it means to transcend body and experience that supreme bliss which cannot be broken—that happiness which cannot be disturbed by any sorrow. The great soul who has attained Samadhi, he is like one intoxicated with joy; he is filled with a divine playfulness. Some of you, perhaps, connect holiness with long face and melancholy aspect. These attributes belong to the world. As we come in contact with light we leave darkness behind. In the presence of spiritual radiance we find joy, peace, and silence.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

He who reigns within himself, and rules passions, desires, and fears, is more than a king. —*Milton.*

A friend once asked, "What is ecstasy?" I said, "There are pearls in the sea, but to get them you have to dive to the bottom. Ecstasy is a dive to the bottom of spiritual things. It is not a trance; but it is like a dive, because, as a diver has to stop breathing, so in ecstasy the outward senses must be stopped." —*Sadhu Sundar Singh.*

He who thinks he knows It not, knows It. He who thinks he knows It, knows It not. The true knowers think they can never know It (because of Its infinitude), while the ignorant think they know It. —*Kena-Upanishad.*

If you see a man unterrified in the midst of dangers, untouched by desires, happy in adversity, peaceful amid the storm, will you not say: A divine power has descended upon that man? —*Seneca.*

Some people are for seeing God with their eyes, as they can see a cow (which thou lovest for the milk, and for the cheese, and for thine own profit). Thus do all those who love God for the sake of outward riches or of inward comfort; they do not love aright, but seek only themselves and their own advantage. —*Meister Eckhart.*

The Perfect man hath no thought of self; the Spiritlike man no thought of merit; the Sagely minded man no thought of fame. —*Lao Tzu.*

Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. —*Jesus the Christ.*

Egotism can be got rid of if Enlightenment comes; for then one enters into Samadhi, and only in Samadhi is the "I" obliterated. But such Enlightenment is very difficult to attain. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Who in the midst of just provocation to anger instantly finds the fit word which settles all around him in silence, is more than wise or just; he is, were he a beggar, of more than royal blood; he is of celestial descent. —*Lavater.*

And this is wisdom, for a man to preserve that divine Spirit which is within him serene and undefiled, and above all pains or pleasures. —*Marcus Aurelius.*

To search for the mysterious and practice miracles in order to be mentioned with honor in future ages: this is what I do not do. —*Confucius.*

THE MEDITATION OF ANANDA

By A. E.

(From "Imaginations and Reveries")

Ananda rose from his seat under the banyan tree. He passed his hand unsteadily over his brow. Throughout the day the young ascetic had been plunged in profound meditation; and now, returning from heaven to earth, he was bewildered like one who awakens in darkness and knows not where he is. All day long before his inner eye burned the light of the *lokas,* until he was wearied and exhausted with their splendours; space glowed like a diamond with intolerable lustre, and there was no end to the dazzling procession of figures. He had seen the fiery dreams of the dead in heaven. He had been tormented by the music of celestial singers, whose choral song reflected in its ripples the rhythmic pulse of being. He saw how these orbs were held within luminous orbs of wider circuit; and vaster and vaster grew the vistas, until at last, a mere speck of life, he bore the burden of innumerable worlds. Seeking for Brahma, he found only the great illusion as infinite as Brahma's being.

If these things were shadows, the earth and the forests he returned to, viewed at evening, seemed still more unreal, the mere dusky flutter of a moth's wings in space, so filmy and evanescent that if he had sunk as through transparent ether into the void, it would not have been wonderful.

Ananda, still half entranced, turned homeward. As he trod the dim alleys he noticed not the flaming eyes which regarded him from the gloom; the serpents rustling amid the undergrowth; the lizards, fireflies, insects, and the innumerable lives of which the Indian Forest was rumorous; they also were but shadows. He paused near the village, hearing the sound of human voices, of children at play. He felt a pity for these tiny beings, who struggled and shouted, rolling over each other in ecstasies of joy. The great illusion had indeed devoured them, before whose spirits the Devas themselves once were worshippers. Then, close beside him, he heard a voice whose low tone of reverence soothed him; it was akin to his own nature, and it awakened him fully. A little crowd of five or six people were listening silently to an old man who read from a palm-leaf manuscript. Ananda knew by the orange-colored robes of the old man that here was a brother of the new faith and he paused with the others. What was his illusion? The old man lifted his head for a moment as the ascetic came closer, and then continued as before. He was reading "The Legend of the Great King of Glory," and Ananda listened while the story was told of the Wonderful Wheel, the Elephant Treasure, the Lake and Palace of Righteousness, and of the meditation, how *the Great King of Glory entered the golden chamber, and set himself down on the silver couch, and he let his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of love; and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, did he continue to pervade with heart of Love, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure.*

When the old man had ended, Ananda went back into the forest. He had found the secret of the true, how the Vision could be left behind and the Being entered. Another legend rose in his mind, a faëry legend of righteousness expanding and filling the universe, a vision beautiful and full of old enchantment, and his heart sang within him. He seated himself again under the banyan tree. He rose up in soul. He saw before him images long forgotten of those who suffer in the sorrowful earth. He saw the desolation and loneliness of old age, the insults of the captive, the misery of the leper and outcast, the chill horror and darkness of life in a dungeon. He drank in all their sorrow. From his heart he went out to them. Love, a fierce and tender flame, arose; pity, a breath from the vast; sympathy, born of pity. This triple fire sent forth its rays; they surrounded those dark souls; they pervaded them; they beat down oppression.

* * * * * *

While Ananda, with spiritual magic, sent forth the healing powers through the four quarters of the world, far away at that moment a king sat enthroned in his hall. A captive was bound before him—bound, but proud, defiant, unconquerable of soul. There was silence in the hall until the king spake the doom and torture for this ancient enemy.

The king spake: "I had thought to do some fierce thing to thee and so end thy days, my enemy. But I remember now, with sorrow, the great wrongs we have done to each other, and the hearts made sore by our hatred. I shall do no more wrong to thee; thou art free to depart. Do what thou wilt. I will make restitution to thee as far as may be for thy ruined state."

Then the soul which no might could conquer was conquered utterly—the knees of the captive were bowed and his pride was overcome. "My brother," he said, and could say no more.

* * * * * *

To watch for years a little narrow slit high up in a dark cell, so high that he could not reach up and look out, and there to see daily the change from blue to dark in the sky, had withered a prisoner's soul. The bitter tears came no more, hardly even sorrow, only a dull, dead feeling. But that day a great groan burst from him. He heard outside the laugh of a child who was playing and gathering flowers under the high, grey walls. Then it all came over him—the divine things missed, the light, the glory, and the beauty that the earth puts forth for her children. The narrow slit was darkened and half of a little bronze face appeared.

"Who are you down there in the darkness who sigh so? Are you all alone there? For so many years! Ah, poor man! I would come down to you if I could, but I will sit here and talk to you for a while. Here are flowers for you," and a little arm showered them in by handfuls until the room was full of the intoxicating fragrance of summer. Day after day the child came, and the dull heart entered once more into the great human love.

* * * * * *

At twilight, by a deep and wide river, an old woman sat alone, dreamy and full of memories. The lights of the swift passing boats and the light of the stars were just as in childhood and the old love-time. Old, feeble, it was time for her to hurry away from the place which changed not with her sorrow.

"Do you see our old neighbour there?" said Ayesha to her lover. "They say she was once as beautiful as you would make me think I now am. How lonely she must be! Let us come near and speak to her," and the lover went gladly. Though they spoke to each other rather than to her, yet something of the past, which never dies when love, the immortal, has pervaded it, rose up again as she heard their voices. She smiled, thinking of years of burning beauty.

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A teacher, accompanied by his disciples, was passing by the wayside where a leper sat.

The teacher said: "Here is our brother, whom we may not touch, but he need not be shut out from truth. We may sit down where he can listen."

He sat on the wayside near the leper, and his disciples stood around him. He spoke words full of love, kindliness, and pity—the eternal truths which make the soul grow full of sweetness and youth. A small, old spot began to glow in the heart of the leper, and the tears ran down his blighted face.

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All these were the deeds of Ananda the ascetic, and the Watcher who was over him from all eternity made a great stride towards that soul.

THE BREATHLESS HOUR

By Sister Daya

Now is the moment of twilight;
The valley is brimming with silence
Tense with the call of a bird—
Purusha,
Purusha,
Purusha,
And the cricket's answering word—
Prakriti!
Prakriti!
Prakriti!
Which mingle with the murmurings unheard.

It is the breathless hour,
The holy time for bird and bush and flower;
Drenched in a river of silence,
Flowing from all sides, below, above—
The silence of the two Eternal Lovers,
Struck dumb by their unutterable Love.

INDIA ON THE MARCH

By Romain Rolland

(An excerpt from an article appearing in the *Modern Review* for April, 1929, which comprises the first chapters of M. Rolland's new book on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, portions of which will be reprinted in the "Message" whenever possible. The translation is by Kalidas Nag.)

I have dedicated my life to the task of reconciliation among men. I have striven to bring it about among the peoples of Europe. Between, more especially, the two great enemy brothers of the West. I have been attempting the same task, for the last ten years, for the East and the West, and I should like to do the same thing for the supposed spiritual modes—reason and faith—for which the Occident and the Orient are, wrongly, as I think, supposed to stand. It would have been more accurate, perhaps, to say, for the different modes of reason and faith for which they are supposed to stand, for both the one and the other are distributed almost equally on the two sides. But people in general hardly suspect it. . . .

Now I find, on the one hand, people whose hearts are in religion, who keep themselves shut up within the four walls of their chapel, who not only refuse to come out of their prison (it is their right not to, they say!) but would, if they could, deny the right to live to all who live outside; and, on the other, my companions and associates, who have, most of them, cast off their religiosity (it is their right—they, too, say!) and are often—to judge from appearances—too inclined to think it to be their mission to combat and to deny the right of existence of persons who are religiously minded. The result of it all is the futile spectacle of a systematic attempt to destroy religion by men who do not perceive that they are attacking something whose nature they do not understand. . . .

The first condition of knowing, judging, or, if anybody is so disposed, of combating any or all religions is to have experimented the fact of religious consciousness upon oneself. Not even those who have followed a religious vocation are qualified to speak of it, for if they are sincere, they will recognize that religious vocation and religious experience are two separate things. There are many highly respectable priests who are believers from submissiveness, or from prudential or indolent motives, who have never felt the necessity of a religious experience, or, not possessing the strength, have shrunk from gaining it. In contradistinction to these are the numerous persons who, while believing they are free from all religious beliefs, yet live immersed in a kind of suprarational state of mind which they style Socialism, Communism, Humanitarianism, Nationalism, or even Rationalism. It is the quality of the thoughts, and not their object, which points to the source from which they have sprung, or permits us to affirm whether or not they emanate from religion. If our thoughts turn intrepidly to the quest of truth at any cost, if they apply themselves to it with wholehearted sincerity, ready for any sacrifice, I shall call them religious, for it is activity of this kind that presupposes faith as a goal of human effort, something which rises above the life of the individual, and, at times above the life of the society that be, even above the life of entire humanity. Even skepticism, when it proceeds from natures which are vigorous and true to the marrow of their bones, when it is an expression of strength and not of weakness, marches with the same glorious army of religious souls, while your thousands of cowardly believers in creeds, clerical or laic, who do not believe because they choose to believe, who only wallow in the stable in which they were born and chew the comfortable cud of their convenient beliefs before racks filled with hay, have no shadow of a right to bear its colors. . . .

I belong to a land of rivers. I love them like living creatures, and I can sympathize with the spirit of my ancestors who offered them milk and wine. Now, of all the rivers, the most sacred is that which gushes out eternally from the depths of our being, from its rocks and sands and glaciers. This is the primeval force. This is what I call religion. It is common to art and to action, to science and to religion—to all belongs this spiritual stream which, flowing out of the dark, fathomless wells of our being, glides down the inevitable slope to the Ocean of Life, conscious, realized and dominated at last. From it, the water rises again as vapor, to the clouds in the sky which, in their turn, feed the sources, and thus the cycles of creation go round and round. From the spring to the sea, from the sea to the spring, it is the same energy—the Being without beginning or end, whom it is of no moment to me whether men call God (if so, what God?) or Force (what force?). If it is Matter, what manner of matter is this that contains in it the energies of the Soul? Words, words! The Unity, the living and vital Unity, and not the Unity which is only abstract, is the essence of it all. It is this that I and the great believers and the great unbelievers worship and, consciously or unconsciously, carry within us.

II

To her, to the Great Goddess Unity, gathering in her golden arms the diversified sheaf of polyphony, I dedicate the new work I am bringing forward today.

For a century, in New India, this has been the target at which all the archers have shot their arrows—the sea into which have flowed in one Ganga-like stream all the torrents of personalities which have surged up from the antique energies of the land. Whatever the difference as between them, from the distance they present the appearance of a majestic *road in motion.* Their goal is the same: unity of mankind through God. And at each relay of the team, unity grows larger and gains more and more in precision.

From the beginning to the end, it is the question of co-operation on a footing of equality of the East and of the West, of the powers of reason with those, not of faith in the accepted uncritical sense which the word has come to bear among exhausted nations in a servile age, but of an intuition vital and penetrating, like the eye on the forehead of the Cyclops, which completes, but does not render unnecessary, the other two eyes.

A splendid procession of heroes of Spirit, at the beginning and end of which stand two geniuses of vast sweep who have covered the whole range of the thought of their times: Ram Mohun Roy and Aurobindo Ghose—the former dead these hundred years, and the other still in his prime; both of them accomplishing the synthesis of the highest cultures of Asia and of Europe.

Ram Mohun Roy (1774-1833), brought up in the court of the Great Mogul where the official language was still Persian, learned Arabic when he was a child and read Aristotle and Euclid in that language. Though a Bengali of orthodox family nurtured in Islamic thought, well-versed in Sanskrit, Bengali, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and English, a Raja and the ambassador of the Emperor of Delhi in England, an energetic reformer in perpetual conflict with the religious and social prejudices of his own people, he left, after sixty years of heroic labor, deep in the furrow the ploughshare of his famous Brahmo Samaj, whose centenary India is celebrating this year (August 25, 1928). This Universal Church, the abode of the One Almighty, open to all without distinction of color, caste, nationality, or religion, is the *Magna Charta Dei,* the Divine Magna Charta which has inaugurated a new era for Asia and India.

But the unity which this prince of the Spirit built up was the unity of an *élite,* like him aristocratic, of which the Tagores, after him, are the noblest representatives. . . .

With the great Keshub Chunder Sen (1838-1884), the stream widens, the first floodgates of red blood open: of the blood of Christ, the blood of *all the Ancients of the human race, prophets, saints, martyrs, sages, apostles, missionaries, philanthropists of all times and of all lands, all the heroes of charity and of truth* (among whom scientists have their due place), *for all of them are bearers of messages from the Heaven which is within man.*

Keshub brings to India the message of the *New Dispensation* which, in his mind, formed the sequel to the gospel of Jesus and was meant for all mankind. But an aristocracy was also the basis of his unitarianism, which, to those more democratic than Ram Mohun Roy, appears nearly equivalent to the unitarianism of our great Western intellectuals, who, at the time when at the Sorbonne they made God and Reason march together, imposed upon all a rigorous deism modelled on that of the Bible, and excluded from its tenets both absolute monism, which is readily treated as atheism, and popular polytheism, which they tried to explain from the intellectualist's standpoint, as the symbol of the attributes of a sole God.

Such a radical reforming movement, marked as it was by too pronounced a stamp of the West, brought in its wake a national and popular reaction in the movement which Dayananda Saraswati (1827-1883) inaugurated. To the *Brahmo Samaj* he opposed the *Arya Samaj* (1875) which was founded on principles as pure, but drawn exclusively from the thought elements of the race, rigorously boiled down and reorganized—whether it would submit to the process or not—into a vigorous and severe Hindu monotheism.

Between the two monotheisms of Keshub and of Dayananda there remained the great jungle of millions of gods, and the formless, nameless Being—the Absolute.

Now it was, at the same epoch, that the decisive step was taken by Ramakrishna, a simple seer with an unlimited heart. He brought the waters of God to all these brooks and rivulets. He excluded none from it, neither the myriads of humble or the shining little gods, nor the great god of India, Islam, or Galilee, nor God the Father (or the Mother), nor the shoreless and the bottomless Ocean—Ineffable Unity.

His sacred thirst for the Divine drank at them all. He said smilingly, "Let others, yet others, come too! All the doors are open to future gods, for all that were, that are, and that shall be, are One."

That incarnate Unity which Ramakrishna realized by the sheer genius of his heart alone, which he himself was, and which through him became the voice of a new catholicity, found its St. Paul, though one of a more ample and encyclopedic mind, in Vivekananda, his great disciple (1863-1902). In his writings and in his preaching, he has taken up the message of the master and reshaped it with his own passion and intellectual grip. He has not only erected to the Unity of the Human Spirit a monument of philosophy in which Western science and Vedantic truths seek to be harmonized, and from which no form of free thought, be it negation itself, is excluded; he has put an end as well to the separation that existed among his own people between action and meditation, and he has founded an order which resembles those of the earlier, heroic days of Christianity, devoting itself equally to the service of God and to the service of erring, suffering, mortal men. This order—the Ramakrishna Mission—whose high aim is to produce *the complete man* by the *threefold culture of the heart, the head, and the hand, and whose sole object is to harmonize and bring about the cooperation of the diverse faiths and doctrines of the universe* has created a constellation of monasteries, schools, and institutions for social service, whose polestar, the *Advaita Ashram* situated on the Himalayan snows, is consecrated to the absolute monism of science and of abstract Vedantism, and to the reconciliation—on this high plateau of Spirit overlooking all the valleys of knowledge—of the East and the West.

Yet this is not all. Here comes Aurobindo Ghose, the completest synthesis that has been realized to this day of the genius of Asia and of the genius of Europe. Saturated with modern science and the wisdom of Hindu Scriptures, of which he is the learned and bold interpreter in India of today; writing and reading Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, English, French, and German; the former leader of the Bengali revolutionary school of politics; now living in retirement at Pondicherry where for twenty years he has concentrated his energies on the examination of the wisdom and the science of India, he has brought a new message to his countrymen, which completes those preceding it, and which, in order to harmonize the spiritual energies of India with the activism of the West, turns all the energies of the mind to ever-increasing action. The West, which has been complacently picturing to itself an Orient passive, static, quietist, will be surprised to see India surpassing us very soon in the zeal for progress and of activity. If with Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and Ghose she retires at times into the farthest retreats of her thought, it is only to take a spring and bound forward. . . .

III

For the present, let us go back to the personalities who have opened to us the road to the new point of view, from whose vantage ground we can descry the unperceived unity of human thought, and of the human herds jostling against one another in the arena.

I am going to recount the life stories of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

The subject of this book is threefold, yet one. It comprises the story of two extraordinary lives—one half-legendary, the other truly epical—which have unfolded themselves before our eyes in our own times, and the account of a powerful system of thought, at once religious, philosophical, moral, and social, which India has brought forward from the depths of her past and is offering today to Humanity.

Though the human interest, the fascinating poetry, the charm and the heroic grandeur of these two lives are sufficient, as you will all find, to explain why I have spent two years of my life in exploring and tracing their course and making them accessible to you, it is not mere curiosity that has prompted me to undertake the journey. I am not a dilettante. I do not bring to jaded readers reasons for flying from themselves; I ask them to discover themselves, to seek and find the Self, naked and profound, without the mask of falsehood. I have made for myself a company of these seekers. It does not matter to me whether they are dead or living; and limits of ages or nations do not count with me. For the bare soul there is neither East nor West; these are but outward trappings. The whole world is its home. And this house, built by all, belongs to all.

I hope I shall be excused, if, in order to make intelligible the intimate processes of thought out of which this book has come, I have for a moment put myself upon the stage; but I have done so because it was convenient to cite my case as an example, and not because I believed myself to be in any way exceptional. I am one of my own people. I represent thousands of Western men and women who have not the means nor the time to express their thoughts. Every time that one of us speaks out from the depths of his heart and with the object of liberating himself, he enfranchises at the same time thousands of living silences. It is the echo of their voice, and not my words, that I ask you to listen to.

I was born and I passed the first fourteen years of my life in a district of central France where my family had been settled for centuries. My lineage is exclusively French and Catholic, without a tinge of foreign connections. And the early environment in which I was almost hermetically sealed till my sojourn in Paris, was that of an old Nivernais district which permitted no alien influences to percolate into it. In this locked-up vase shaped from the clay of Gaul and its blue sky and the water of its rivers, I found all the colors and the impressions of the universe. When, later in life, I followed, staff in hand, the roads and alleys of thought, nowhere did I find anything that was strange to me. All these varied aspects of the mind which I had seen or divined were, from the very beginning, mine. Outward experience in this case only completed the realization of states of mind of which I had the consciousness though not always the key. Neither Shakespeare nor Beethoven, neither Tolstoy nor Rome—none, that is to say, of the masters on whom I had been nurtured—revealed to me anything but the "Open Sesame" of my subterranean city, my Herculanium, which sleeps under the beds of its lava. I am convinced that it slept within the breast of many of those who live around me, only they ignore its existence as I did. Few venture beyond the first stage of the digs laid out for their daily use by their practical wisdom manipulating its necessities with economy or beyond the will of those master minds who have forged the unity, by turns Royal or Jacobin, of France. I admire the structure. Historian by profession, I see in it one of those masterpieces of human effort enlightened by intelligence. *Aere perennius.* But after the ancient custom which required that in order to make the work endure the living body of a man should be walled up in the masonry, our master architects have entombed in their work thousands of palpitating souls. . . .

I have just recovered the key of a lost staircase which leads to some of these proscribed souls. The stairs in the wall, coiled like a serpent, rise from the profound depths of my Self to those high terraces whose forehead is crowned by stars. None of the things I saw there were to me sights unknown. I had seen them all before—I knew this very well—but I did not know where I had seen them. I had more than once recited from memory, with its lapses, to be sure, the lesson in thought which I had formerly learned—from one of my old, old selves, was it? Today I read that lesson again in its clarity and fullness in the book which is held out before me by that unlettered, genial soul; by the man who knew every one of its pages by heart — Ramakrishna.

Him I present to you in my turn, not as a new book, but a very old one, which all of you have gone through, though many might have stopped only at the alphabet. . . . It is always the same book. It is always the same man—the eternal Son of Man—our Son—our God born again. At each of his returns he reveals himself just a little richer of the universe. With the differences that time and place make, Ramakrishna is a younger brother of our Christ.

We may, if we like, show, as free-thinking exegesists are trying to do today, that the doctrines which Christ preached were current in the Oriental world before his time, and sown abroad by the thinkers of Chaldea, Egypt, Athens, and Ionia. Yet we can never prevent the personality of Christ (it does not matter whether it is fact or only legend—these are but two orders of the same reality) from prevailing rightly, in human history, over the personality of a Plato. It is a monumental and a necessary creation of the soul of humanity. It is its finest fruit grown in one of its autumns. . . .

I bring to Europe—which ignores it—the fruit of a new autumn, a new message of the soul, the symphony of India, which bears the name Ramakrishna. It can be shown, as we shall try to do, that this symphony, like that of Beethoven, is built up of a hundred musical elements of the past. But the master-spirit in whom all these elements are brought together, and who organizes them in a supreme harmony, is always the man who gives his name to the work, though generations may have toiled upon it. And it is he who from his victorious signpost marks out a new era.

The man whose figure I am invoking today was the crowning glory of two thousand years of spiritual life of a people of three hundred millions. Dead these forty years, he is the soul which animates modern India. He was neither a hero of action like Gandhi, nor a hero of art or intellect like Goethe and Tagore. He was a little village Brahmin of Bengal, whose external life passed within its narrow framework without stirring events, and outside the political and social activities of his times. But his spiritual life embraced the multitudinous throng of gods and men. It formed a part of the very source of divine energy, of *Shakti,* of whom Vidyapati, the old poet of Mithila, sings.

There are very few who reach back to the source. This insignificant villager of Bengal who listened to the message of his heart has found his way to the shores of the inner Ocean. He has wedded himself to it, thus realizing the couplet of the Upanishad:

"I am older than the radiant gods. I am the first-born of the Essence. I am the artery of Immortality."

I wish to bring to the ears of fever-stricken Europe, which has murdered sleep, the pulse beats of this artery. I wish to sprinkle its lips with the blood of Immortality.

AN INTERVIEW*

Between Mr. John Mott and Mahatma M. K. Gandhi

[Some time in 1928, Mahatma Gandhi was visited by Mr. John Mott who had come to India in order to preside over a World Students' Federation which was being held at Mysore. Dr. Mott, who for the last fifty years has identified himself with student movements in every country of the world, is known and loved in the East as well as in the West. His wide-reaching influence over young lives made his contact with Mahatma Gandhi peculiarly significant. We regret that we can give only a portion of what passed between them. After speaking of various subjects, political and otherwise, the question of conversion was taken up in its relation to the problem of untouchability.]

Dr. Mott: "Do you, then, disbelieve in all conversion?"

Gandhiji: "I disbelieve in the conversion of one person by another. My effort should never be to undermine another's faith, but to make him a better follower of his own faith. This implies belief in the truth of all religions, and, therefore, respect for them. It again implies true humility, a recognition of the fact that the divine light having been vouchsafed to all religions through an imperfect medium of flesh, they must share, in more or less degree, the imperfection of the vehicle."

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*From "Young India."

Dr. Mott: "Is it not our duty to help our fellow beings to the maximum of truth that we may possess, to share with them our deepest spiritual experiences?"

Gandhiji: "I am sorry I must again differ from you, for the simple reason that the deepest spiritual truths are always unutterable. That light to which you refer transcends speech. It can be felt only through the inner experience. And then, the highest truth needs no communicating, for it is, by its very nature, self-propelling. It radiates its influence silently as the rose its fragrance, without the intervention of a medium."

Dr. Mott: "But even God sometimes speaks through His prophets."

Gandhiji: "Yes, but the prophets speak not through the tongue, but through their lives. I have, however, known that in this matter I am up against a solid wall of Christian opinion."

"Oh, no," replied Dr. Mott. "Even among Christians there is a school of thought—and it is growing—which holds that the authoritarian method should not be employed, but that each individual should be left to discover the deepest truths of life for himself. . ."

"I am glad to hear you say this," remarked Gandhiji. "That is what Hinduism certainly inculcates."

The change from this thorny subject to the problem of the modern youth was like a change from a hothouse atmosphere to the fresh open air of the fields.

"What counsel do you give to the young men who are fighting a losing battle with their lower selves and come to you for advice?" asked Dr. Mott.

"Simply prayer," replied Gandhiji. "One must humble oneself utterly, and look beyond oneself for strength."

"But what if the young men complain that their prayer is not heard, that they feel like speaking to brass heavens, as it were?"

"To want an answer to one's prayer," replied Gandhiji, "is to tempt God. If prayer fails to bring relief it is only lip prayer. If prayer does not help, nothing else will. One must go on ceaselessly. This, then, is my message to the youth. In spite of themselves the youth must believe in the all-conquering power of love and truth."

"The difficulty with our youth," explained Dr. Mott, "is that the study of science and modern philosophy has demolished their faith, and so they are burned up by the fire of disbelief."

"That," answered Gandhiji, "is due to the fact that with them faith is an effort of the intellect, not an experience of the soul. Intellect takes us along in the battle of life to a certain limit, but at the crucial moment it fails us. Faith transcends reason. It is when the horizon is the darkest, and human reason is beaten down to the ground, that faith shines brightest and comes to our rescue. It is such faith that our youth require, and this comes when one has shed all pride of intellect and surrendered oneself entirely to His will."

God is endless sovereign Truth, endless sovereign Wisdom, endless sovereign Love, unmade; and man's Soul is a creature in God which hath the same properties *made* . . . Whereof God enjoyeth in the creature; and the creature in God, endlessly marvelling.

—*Julian, Anchoress at Norwich* (1373).

SPIRITUAL MAGNITUDE

By Gayatri Devi

(An address delivered at a Sunday morning Service, Ananda-Ashrama)

"In this world of dream, my soul, dream a truer dream!" These words mark the beginning of a new month in Swami Paramananda's *Book of Daily Thoughts and Prayers.* It is a secret we learn in life that as we finish a day, as we leave a thing behind, we should bring it to a close, to completion. We must learn not to look back to our yesterdays and think about their struggles, difficulties, and errors. We need to forget, for it is only by so doing that we can go forward always with a fresh start, an inspiring impulse, a new beginning. You may ask, "Is it possible for us to forget the past —our blunders, our mistakes?" We have to, especially on the spiritual path. Thought of failure is like a burden on our back. In hill climbing we cannot afford to carry a heavy load, because we shall need all our energy for the climb. Same way it is with our spiritual life. We must look ahead into the future; future holds for us great things, the manifestation of all our ideals and dreams. This is perhaps one of the most fundamental secrets of holy living: always to be free, free of binding habits. No matter what happens, drop them, drop them altogether; otherwise, life becomes burdensome. Suppose we have used a harsh word or committed a blunder, shall we go back and regret? If we do, our today will be spoiled. Rather, let us learn that no matter what happens, no matter how many times we stumble and fall, if we can keep our gaze fixed upon the Ideal and never turn back, we shall glorify whatever we do. It is a bad habit forever to be looking into the past; inspiration lies in what is coming—new opportunities, new possibilities to expand our soul, to give ourselves to a bigger life.

This month—the month of March—has for its motto that which is really the fruition of all life—"Power of Holiness." Holiness is the fragrance, the essence, the subtlest and most beautiful aspect of the human soul. It is our goal; and yet before we can reach that goal, before such living holiness can enter our being, how many chapters we shall have to write in the book of our life, how many pages will have to be wiped out and rewritten! And with what are we going to fill those pages? With selfish thoughts? With small regrets? We can never attain holiness, or anything lofty, if we let petty feelings enter in. Every page of our life must be clean, pure, sanctified. Whatever in life is beautiful and glorious will be given into our hands; but it is our striving that will bring us to our end. We must strive for an ideal far greater than that of ordinary life—ideal of soul elegance, of inner fulfillment. If, holding to this, we can brush aside all past misdeeds, when we do things wrong, forget them—next time we shall do them right—when we fall, get up with new courage, new hope, new strength, then we shall know the life of perpetual inspiration, the spiritual life.

As we wake in the morning, the beautiful day opens before every one of us with something fresh and fragrant. Yet, sometimes, in spite of happy surroundings, we fail to feel that lightness of heart within—the freedom, the joy. It is because we fall back upon our former habits. We think of the little, petty things, and that kills our inspiration. There should not be anything like this in spiritual life. It is new birth with each new dawn. You start your day with hope and end it, not with fatigue, but with a sense of satisfaction; and tomorrow you have a greater impetus to live again, and for a greater cause. To love and to give —that is the way to higher unfoldment, to real blossoming of life.

"Holy sanctity, Light of heaven,
Fill my life with Thy divine radiance.
Transform my body, my senses, and all that is
senseless in me.
Make me Thine own!"

Holy sanctity is the message of light. Our light will come only as we look upon God. Constant inspiration we can expect only as we blend with Him, because He is Light; He is Life; He is Sanctity; He is All! Here is our starting point, the direct ray, the clear path leading to fulfillment.

We should make no distinction between our everyday life and our Ideal. Bhagavad-Gita tells us: "Fill thy mind with Me, be thou My devotee, worship Me and bow down to Me; thus steadfastly uniting thy heart with Me alone, and regarding Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt come unto Me." In these words, very plainly, very clearly, is given the key to our unfoldment, to our blossoming. Let us compare our life with the flower, so lovely, so delicate, dainty, and fragrant. Not only does the flower inspire the hearts of poets and fill the hearts of mystics with divine love; it can touch even the hearts of criminals, of harsh, cruel people. In comparison with it, our life will seem very hard, coarse, rough, and rude; yet this does not mean that we are any less beautiful than a flower. In its little bosom it can carry but a part of divine Life and Beauty. We have far greater possibilities. We can catch the infinite, unbounded radiance of that Life. We can reveal beauty in its fullness. This is not just a sentimental fancy, although it sounds sentimental when we bring it to the point of words. Our life is real; it is more than a flower. Its fragrance reaches everywhere, and, like a flower, it can melt the hardest heart.

How does inspiration come to a flower? It comes to it as a dewdrop, as sunshine, as rain. Same way our inspiration comes to us in the form of our own devotion and of our love—our love of higher things. When we give the support, the very warmth of our soul, to such things, our life bursts into bloom. This is the holy life, the sanctified life—life of the individual melted into the very essence of Truth. Swami Paramananda tells us in the salient thought of the month, "Manifest spiritual magnitude." What is spiritual magnitude? Wherein does it lie? Do we acquire it through the refinement of our intellectual culture? Not there. It lies in that blossoming, in being and becoming. "Being and becoming"—the Swami's favorite words. We become life itself; we become the Ideal; we become God.

Holy living does not mean merely sitting in a corner and worshipping some chosen Deity with little oblations of words and prayers. The Lord never accepts our offering if outwardly we show a lack of godliness. Sometimes we are very fanatical in our zeal; we think that all we need to do is to make a little altar of our own, and that our outer actions do not matter. There must be consistency; our inner and outer life must coincide. If we are hard, if we feel lack of gentleness toward each other, our worship is in vain. Did not Christ say: Make thy peace with thy brother before thou layest thy offering on the altar? We cannot give our life to God and not give to each other. We must understand very clearly that to manifest spiritual magnitude means to express through our life that bigness, that nobility-of-heart quality, which wipes out every trace of jealousy, of greed, of mean pettiness. When our life is clean and pure, only then can we manifest God-life. There is no other way. We cannot pile up in one corner all the unwholesome rubbish we create through our thoughts—how many times people have hurt us; how we can do something to them to pay them back; how we have been ill-treated—and expect in another corner to have God enter in. He will never enter into such a heart, such a soul. If He is the Sinless, the Pure, the Holy of all Holies, how can He come to a heart which is impure, unsanctified, unholy? It is not through breaking spiritual rules and regulations outwardly that we become unholy; it is when we break them inside. We fail toward God when we fail toward each other—toward His children—when we withhold our love, our understanding, our sympathy from those who surround us, from those with whom we come in contact in the family, in society, and in the larger sphere of life.

We are constantly turning our backs to our Ideal. We cannot blind ourselves, do just as we please, and yet worship God. It is impossible. We never get anywhere that way. Our worship is real only when it brings into our heart a glow which can destroy all that is unworthy of man. It is unworthy for us to indulge at any time, for any reason, in a thought that is not loving, that is not kind. If we indulge in one such thought, a second will approach, because there is nothing that spreads more than evil thinking; it spots the surface of our mind and takes away from our sanctity, making it impossible for us to manifest spiritual magnitude. Spiritual magnitude is God dwelling in us in the form of peace, in the form of gentleness, in the form of mellowness. Some people think they cannot worship God, but when they hold to such principles they do worship Him. We must not, however, carry these as a theory; we must apply them in our life. Doing, being, and becoming—we arrive at the same point over and over again. You have to *be* the thing. If love is your ideal, be love incarnate. If gentleness is your ideal, be that. Show forth only those qualities which give the stamp of holiness. Nothing outer can increase the inner; it is the inner that transforms the outer. If inside we live in light—the light of God—outer conditions must follow sooner or later.

You cannot hide your light under a bushel; holiness cannot be hidden under the veil of circumstance or lack of opportunity; it is self-revealing, self-effulgent. Truth is self-effulgent, and when our life catches a spark from that Fire we become self-effulgent. Even physically our radiance will shine, our lips will be full of laughter and joy, and there will not be a frown or a hard line. When hard look and line come, you may know things are not right. When there is the opposite—the overflow of love, not only toward the Ideal, but including all God's children—your whole bearing will convey it. And this is to manifest spiritual magnitude.

We all have big dreams for our life. We think that there will come a day when we shall be free—free of our failings, of our imperfections. But dreams can be fulfilled only as we take steps gradually and slowly toward their fulfillment. You cannot remain in one place and yet reach your goal. There must be an effort, but in that effort there is joy. Even in our everyday life, when we are going to see something interesting or beautiful—a moving picture show or a play—we go with earnestness and eagerness. Same way when we know there is a point where ends all blemish, all unwholesomeness, we should turn our steps toward it with new life, with courage.

It is man himself who is his own enemy. He indulges in dullness and lethargy. "What is the hurry about spiritual life?" you may ask. There is no hurry, but there must be ardor, intensity, expressed through graceful and inspired living. To my mind grace and inspiration are the expression of true holiness. When we know that no matter what happens, nothing will have the power to pull us back, we shall learn to move forward with neither long face nor depressed heart, but with inner courage. To find this strength, we must go within, deeper and deeper into our soul, to where there is no end, no boundary line. It is hard to express through words how true it is what philosophers have said, that things of the higher realm cannot be spoken of. If we are willing to live for the Ideal, the Higher Cause, words are not necessary. Those whose hearts are ready, they understand. They are not constantly calculating about their unfoldment. Does the flower know when it is going to open its petals? No. We cannot be conscious about our spiritual growth. A child grows, but he is not aware of it. Same way with spiritual blossoming; it takes place so naturally that there is nothing to remind us that anything wonderful is happening. Sometimes we get self-righteous in our spiritual life. We must be natural as the flower, as the ever-flowing stream. Spiritual life is not a life of strain, life of perpetual struggle, unless we make it so. There is an easy way: "Fill thy mind with Me; worship Me and bow down to Me!" If we can bring our life to Him, the rest will be taken care of. We have the assurance. The Gita has told us: You may be the wretchedest of the wretched, greatest of all sinners, yet if you take shelter in Me, I will save you.

No matter how petty, how small, how unloving, how unkind you may be, just go to Him and ask Him to receive you. He will. You may say, "There is no hope for me; everybody is not chosen for such a life." We are His—all of us. Is it not a relief to know that we belong to Someone? In life often we feel that we have nothing to cling to, not even our friends—their love, their human affection. There is One, however, who will always accept us, and to Him we should go. Every life will be washed. A little drop of water, though it may be full of sand and mud, when it slips into the ocean becomes clean. Same way with us. As we plunge our failings and shortcomings into the Source, as we merge our unholy life with His holy Life, we are transformed.

When we cling to the world with its various blinding attractions, we miss something—we miss God. This is just an echo of what Christ said: Those who lose their life for my sake, the same shall find it. Every day is our opportunity, every hour, every moment. Yet how many hours we waste in looking back, or in thoughts of externals, such as clothes and food. That is the way our time slips by. If we were careful and vigilant, we would think and speak of higher things and make every moment fruitful. Nothing can separate us from our God-part. Why forget this? Remember, remember, remember constantly: "Fill thy heart and mind with Me; be thou My devotee." If we are able to do this, then nothing else is left for us to do.

REPORT

On June 11, 1929, the Boston Centre acquired an Ashrama of its own, located on the South Shore, at Cohasset, Massachusetts, a mile and a half from the ocean and about twenty-three miles from Boston. Although adjoining developed estates, it is remarkably natural and unspoiled—a group of great rocks crowning acres of woodland and ample field. A grassy driveway winds from the rustic gate to the foot of the rocks. Thence half-natural, half-built steps lead up to a house small and inviting, with porches overlooking all directions. Here one feels a surprising sense of retreat, for no house or road can be seen; only an expanse of tree-tops, with their contrasting greens. The air is laden with the mingled fragrance of pine and ocean.

A preliminary Dedication Service was held on June 15th, when about fifty members assembled to listen to Swami Paramananda as he gave voice to the simple beauty and holy charm of the place. Stately trees formed a natural cathedral, while a low rock provided an altar which was decorated with wild flowers. Violin solos by Mr. Hansen of the Boston Symphony Orchestra supplemented the Service. This was the only event there before the Swami's departure for California where he remained ten days, returning to Boston for the final Dedication on July 13th. Since then Thursday and Saturday have been established as Ashrama days with Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Locke living at the cottage and acting as host and hostess. Plans are being carried out for enlarging the original quarters to accommodate many friends who are eager to spend at least a part of their vacation at the retreat. Nothing that has been done in Boston in connection with the Vedanta Centre through all the past years has given greater joy to all friends than this opportunity of combining spiritual and natural recreation.

While the Boston work is thus expanding, full activities at the Pacific Coast Ananda-Ashrama are being carried on with untiring zeal by that group of consecrated workers. Sister Daya, who has been in Boston for the past year, is now in California conducting all Classes and Services at the Ashrama as well as the Pasadena and Los Angeles Branches.

It is most gratifying to see the large attendance keeping up even during the summer months at the Boston Centre. There will be no change in the regular Services held at the Temple of the Universal Spirit: Sunday morning at eleven and Sunday and Tuesday evenings at eight. When the Swami is absent Charushila Devi conducts the Services. This Hindu sister, through her earnest and loving spirit, has won the deep affection of all who have come to know her.

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VOLUME XVIII NUMBER 7

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda.

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

OCTOBER, 1929

KNOW THYSELF

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Message of the East

> "And behold the glory of the God of
> Israel came from the way of the East."
> —*Ezekiel*
>
> "Light shall come again from the East."
> —*Tyndall*

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KINGFISHER, MY SOUL

By Swami Paramananda

THE pearl of great price is hid.
Dive deep, dive deep,
Kingfisher, my soul,
Dive deep, and seek!
Perchance thou findest nothing first;
Kingfisher, my soul,
Persist, persist;
Dive deep, dive deep and seek!
Who know not the secret will laugh at thee,
And will make thee sad.
But lose not thy courage,
Kingfisher, my soul,
The pearl is there!
Faith will find the treasure,
And what is hid will reveal.
Dive deep, dive deep,
Kingfisher, my soul,
And seek, and seek!

KNOW THYSELF

By Swami Paramananda

Let us be still for a few moments, that our mind may be able to throw off any weariness, restlessness, or element of distraction. Stillness of the body gives us poise, strength, and helpfulness, while stillness of the mind opens a great and new vista of usefulness for ourselves and for others. Let us then relax physically and mentally, that our body and mind may become tranquil, receptive, and in tune.

With the musician, his success depends in very large measure upon his instrument, and the tuning of it is an important preliminary act. Same way we should regard our physical vehicle. If it is out of tune, everything that we say or do will be out of tune, even though in our heart we may want to be harmonious. In modern life, in our great haste to get to our task, we are apt to forget this; but it is not speed or haste that is going to insure for us our success. Let a man find himself! You may wonder at this. Why should a man want to find himself? Why should he not first seek God, or Truth? Because there is no fundamental difference between man's discovery of his own inner being, of his essential nature, and That which we call God, or Truth. In fact, there is no discovery more marvelous than for a man to discover himself. It shows him that he is not what he imagined himself to be—a discontented, weak, failing, faltering creature of circumstance, dependent in great measure on the physical life with its aches and pains—but that he has a very great Support which no one can take from him. Christ knew His true entity when He declared: "I and My Father are one!" Anybody possessing this knowledge cannot help but make the same statement, and his words become living. The man, however, who, not knowing, merely imitates like a parrot may commit a sacrilege.

At first it may be difficult for you to believe that you are identical with that Cosmic, Universal Spirit, that you are not susceptible to disease, death, and affliction, and that nothing can touch you. You have formed the habit of identifying yourself with the things that do touch you. A little insult causes a very great wound to your mind and heart; a small calamity seems a tragedy. But all this is changed when you discover your Self. There is nothing so worth while as Self-knowledge. That is why wise men and philosophers of all time—the Greek teachers, the Hindu sages—have laid such emphasis upon it. Instead of giving their pupils a great many book-ideas and filling their minds with details, they planted like a seed one fundamental thought: "Know thyself!" The great Hindu books of wisdom, the Upanishads, tell us that in India whenever disciples came with yearning spirit to know about God and all the mysteries of the universe, the master gave to them only one little sentence: "Know thyself; all else will be known!"

In relation to this, an incident occurs to me. A gentleman who did not grasp the significance of this idea once said to some one, "If I have nothing better to think of than myself, why I had better not think at all." This is to misunderstand the very heart of the matter. The most immediate trouble with us all is that we think of ourselves primarily. Our thoughts run continuously on the surface of our life, causing unrest and difficulty for ourselves and for others. For instance, one who knows the art of healing will ask you to forget yourself. But how difficult you find that is! You say, "How can I forget myself when I have a pain in my body, when I have so much unhappiness in my mind?" In this way, by going over and over your ills, the pains grow deeper and more acute, and it becomes increasingly difficult to get rid of them. You find yourself ever more and more involved in your physical consciousness, till, if any one should come with great and beneficent message, you would not be able to grasp it. You are traveling in the wrong direction. You are going entirely opposite to the Christ-way, by following which man reaches a point of consciousness where he is able to declare: "I and my Father are one!" You have not taken the preliminary step of learning to forget all that which is not the true Self.

If I should ask you, "Who are you?" what answer would you give? You will say, "What definition can I give except my name, my family, my birthplace, etc.?" You will begin to draw a picture of yourself—a very material picture. The Bible tells us that we are a part of Divinity—children of God—but the description you give is entirely aloof and disconnected from that concept. That is the reason why it is exceedingly detrimental for us to dwell on our present idea of the *self*. There is an interesting parable given in the Indo-Aryan Scriptures, which illustrates these differing concepts of our being. Once two men approached a great sage of India. One was a materialist by nature; he wanted all the world's possessions; he wanted power, pomp, and glory. The other was desirous of knowing the Truth for its own sake. He was like Solomon, who, when he sought wisdom, yearned for it. Now, in India, teachers sometimes put their disciples through tests in order to find out whether they are coming because of a little superficial interest and curiosity, or with real earnestness. Just as Christ said: "Cast not your pearls before swine!" meaning that we cannot give indiscriminately. Even the most beneficent truths may prove dangerous for a person who does not know how to use them.

So these two men lived with their teacher and tried to prove their sincerity. One day, the teacher, calling them to him, showed them their reflection in a pan of water. He asked them, "What do you see?"

"We see ourselves, just as we are, well adorned and clean," they replied.

The teacher then addressing them both, pronounced this great Truth: "That is the Self, the Fearless, the Immortal. Verily, thou art That!"

He who had the material mind thought, "Yes, I am That. There is no one to worship, no one to bow before but myself. I shall eat good food and seek my pleasure!" and he went away rejoicing.

The other man also departed. He pondered for a long time on the words of the teacher; but he could not accept as his meaning that the physical being was the Self. So he came back troubled. "Sire," he said, "my body is susceptible to all kinds of ailments; I cannot comprehend how it can be the Self." The teacher calmly repeated: "Seek and know thyself; thou art That!"

According to the parable, the disciple went away and returned several times, till finally he came to know That, hidden within this flesh, this house of clay; through which it is illumined, clarified, and exalted. By following the process of profound discrimination, he learned to know the difference between the bubbles and the water, at the same time realizing that essentially there is no difference, and that whenever we seek to separate the individual entity from the great reservoir of life, the individual inevitably suffers. Just as a little river very soon dries up if it is cut off from its mother-source, just as the tree withers when it is severed from its root, same way are we when we forget our true Self. There can be no destruction for the soul; yet, whenever we fail to remember that Self, no matter how we are living, what may be our vocation, or the opportunities we have in life, that forgetfulness, that lack of knowledge of what is true and fundamental, makes us suffer.

You may say, "If the soul is indestructible, if it is part of the great Mother-Truth—that cosmic, universal Fact—what difference will it make whether we know it or not?" Knowledge is power. "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth will make you free!" Truth is not contained in some creed or dogma or in any book. There are many, many revelations of this same Truth, but for each of us the revelation must take place in his own soul. We must know Truth, and it is not enough to know it theoretically. Some teacher may tell us that we have nothing to fear, that those elements which produce pain are only delusion, that the soul can never be afflicted, and that there is no reality in sadness or sorrow. Yet, in spite of this, we find the clouds of ignorance and misconception playing havoc in our life, making us fearful, turbulent, and unhappy. That is why knowledge must be first hand.

Do not think for a moment that any of the great master-spirits of the world come to prove that they have a monopoly over the spiritual kingdom. They want us to know the same Truth that inspires them. But the Truth is never gained accidentally; it requires practice. True knowledge is more than a passing mental concept. It is based on realization, and realization comes as the result of meditation. Again the Upanishads tell us: "That happiness which belongs to a mind which by deep meditation has been washed clean from all impurity, and has entered within the Self, cannot be described by words; it can be felt by the inward power only."

Failing, faltering, weeping, worrying man suddenly becomes renewed. It is not that the world has changed, or his circumstances; he himself is transformed in such a remarkable manner that nothing any more can frighten, or thwart, or overcome him. Who in the world does not desire such strength and stability? And it is not merely in relation to the spiritual life that it is to be experienced. In our dealings with others, in our business affairs, in our domestic duties—nowhere is the Truth absent. Today we hear it said that religion is one thing and practical life another; that this man has access to it, and that man not. These distinctions vanish when we learn to live in that great Unity. We must form the habit of looking up, looking within, and going forward.

"The Self is subtler than the subtle, greater than the great; It dwells in the heart of every living being. He who is free from all selfish desires and grief beholds the glory of the Atman, the Self."

Here in this quotation from the Upanishads, the matter is stated very clearly. Great secrets may be given to us, but we cannot receive the benefit from them unless the door of our soul is opened, unless we ourselves have evolved certain qualities—the Christ quality, the divine quality, the soul quality. How little we know of these! And how can we ever solve the problem of the world without them! Now, when a man does us wrong, we seek to do him greater wrong; when he strikes at us, we want to strike him back. In striking us, he is conscious of his physical being, and when we return the blow, we share that consciousness. In our days of ignorance, often we are not able to sleep at night because of some insult. We keep on thinking of that, instead of dwelling on higher things—things which are beneficial, restful, and full of healing. We forget our divine nature, and have to be reminded. That is the idea of meditation. Through it we remind ourselves. No one can do these things for us, not even a minister or a priest. Pray? Of course they can pray. They cannot, however, give us any passport for our liberation. Happiness no one can give to us. Opportunities may be created for us, but we have to earn the right to them. The sooner we realize this, the better it will be for us. Epictetus, the great Roman philosopher, said: "If a man is unhappy, remember that his unhappiness is his own fault, for God made all men to be happy."

In the Hindu teaching there is the concept of God as Mother—All-loving Mother. How unhappy a mother is whenever a child suffers, no matter how faulty he may be. Even the worst children are shielded by mother's love. Instead of finding fault with conditions, instead of cursing our destiny, let us bear this in mind, that God made us for happiness, and that we should carry with us a smiling face, a radiant countenance, a buoyant atmosphere. This cannot be done through calculation. As often as we forget our true being, we shall know sadness, anxiety, and turmoil, and as often as we remind ourselves of That, we shall enjoy tranquillity and peace. It is not enough to rush into the world of activity as we often do; there must be a little preparation. We need to take a step toward God, then we can go out and perform our duties.

Why are so many people nervous, irritable, scattered? To me, the cause is their lack of spiritual balance. They take things at their face value. When they are unhappy, they blame others and quarrel with the world. In the case of great souls, however, whenever they are thwarted they go within. They follow the path of nonresistance. It is not that they are weak; they are wise. They do not try to counteract evil with evil. Rather, they put themselves out of the reach of evil. This is something we can all do. "Evil is never conquered by evil; evil is overcome by good." That is the Christ's teaching, the teaching of the Buddha—the Awakened One—and of all the saints and sages. There is no difference in their message. There are not many voices telling us these things; there is only one Voice. We hear the words, but we fail to catch their significance. Through out constant thought of the flesh and of material limitations, we have cut ourselves off from the power of the Spirit, the power of Truth, the power of Life.

Life comes from where? How little we know about Life and its powers. That is why the Greek philosophers—and before the Greeks, the Hindus—used to tell their disciples: "Know thyself!" Why did they teach this so constantly? Would not such knowledge tend to make man egotistic, intolerant, puffed up with vanity? No. The man who knows his Self is humble and full of the desire to love and serve. Such a man is exalted, full of strength, and is never afraid of losing anything, for he knows that he has an abundant and never-failing supply. The element of fear, of mistrust, of all that makes for misery, comes only through this lack of knowledge of our true Self. Know thyself! Know God! Know Truth!—It is all one. That Infinite, Unlimited, Imperishable Being is within us, and also without us. As we come close to Him, our perplexities vanish and our restlessness is dispelled.

"When He is seen who is both high and low, the fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are cut asunder, and all *Karma* (bondage of works) is destroyed."

As the Upanishad says, our heart seems to be bound by fetters, making us tense, and bringing us often to the breaking point. When these are severed we are liberated. This miracle takes place when the soul nature is unfolded. It is the only way man can have any happiness that is permanent, any usefulness that is far-reaching, any peace that is abiding. Therefore, again and again, we are reminded: "O man, know thyself! Do not grieve; do not be despondent. Every one is a child of God, even the most degraded." If you have a real heart pulsating within you, a heart that is not asleep or covered with false notions, and you see some one who is fallen or who is weary and despondent, you will try to quicken him with this knowledge of the unlimited power that lies behind him. A man who finds himself finds God, and also his place in the heart of humanity. A man who finds himself transcends the limitation of the flesh and knows true happiness; for in that transcendence alone lies the fullness, the fulfillment, and the glory.

Just as the bees gather honey from the flowers, let us, in this moment of silence, gather from our mind, from our heart, the Essence, the fundamental and abiding Truth, that we may enrich our consciousness and carry with us something of God, something that is invincible and eternal.

May the Infinite Spirit who is ever with us, who ever watches over our steps, who is our protecting Father and Mother, Guide and Companion, may He bestow upon us His loving protection and surround us with His peace.

Peace, peace, peace be unto us, and to all living beings.

He is in thee, though he be lost from thee; but thou art not in him, till thou hast found him. This is his mercy also, that he would suffer himself to be lost onely where he may be found, so that thou needest not run to *Rome*, nor to *Jerusalem* to seeke him there, but turn thy thoughts into thy owne soule, where he is hid . . .

From *The Scale of Perfection* by Walter Hilton (fourteenth century).

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

There is really but one Self in the universe, all the rest are but its manifestations. . . . If I know one lump of clay perfectly, I know all the clay there is. This is the knowledge of principles, but their adaptations are various. When you know yourself, you know all. —*Swami Vivekananda.*

Of one Word came all things, and all things speak one Word; that is the beginning that speaketh to us. No man without him understandeth or judgeth righteously.
—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Man is an organ of life, and God alone is life.
—*Swedenborg.*

The soul's homeland is the whole space that encircles the height and breadth of the firmament, the whole rounded dome within which lie land and sea, and where all the sentinel stars are taking their turn on duty. —*Seneca.*

Consider the last least object [the atom] at which he [the scientist] can arrive. Perhaps he will think that it is the limit of littleness in nature. But I will show him within this a new abyss. I will paint for him not only the visible universe, but all the immensity of nature that one can conceive within the bounds of this epitome of an atom. He may see an infinity of universes, each with its firmament, its planets, its earth, in the same proportions as in the visible world. —*Pascal.*

He who knoweth others is clever, but he who knoweth himself is enlightened. —*Lao Tzu.*

Of the universal mind each individual man is one more incarnation. All its properties consist in him. —*Emerson.*

LOVE, THE TRANSFORMER

By Diego de Estella

(A Spanish Franciscan preacher and writer of the 16th century)

So great and so rare is the power of love, that I must needs be even as is the object of my love, and according to that at which I arrive by love. There is nought that joins or adheres in as lasting a fashion as love, which joins and unites us with the Beloved in such a way as to transform the lover into the object of his love. Love is nought but a mutual and unitive virtue. As iron, when it is greatly heated in the forge, becomes fire, so my heart, as it burns, O my God, in Thy Divine and sacred fire, is wholly transformed in Thyself by love; it is deified and becomes as God. The iron, cold and dark, black and hard as it is, becomes converted into fire, and grows soft, warm, bright, and shining, with all the properties of fire, doing all its offices and everything that is done by fire, since it can burn, shed light, and enkindle.

The Scriptures call Thee fire, O our God and Lord, and even such do we become when we attain to Thee through love, for whereas we were once sinners, hard like iron, obstinate, cold, dark, and rude, now that we have attained through love to Thyself, and love has thrust us into this forge of living flames, like to that in which Moses saw Thee in the Bush, we are converted into Thyself and made as fire, so that we work Divine works and are spiritual men, and no longer carnal and worldly as we were. Even so the Apostle St. Paul was converted and transformed into Thee, as he said to the Galatians: "I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

So did the holy Apostle live in Thee, and so was he transformed in Thee, that his life was no longer his own, nor was he in himself, but in the Beloved. Would, O my God and Lord, that so my soul might be absorbed in that ocean of infinite love and goodness, that I might no longer be myself, but rather, by Divine participation, a copy and an image of Thy sovereign goodness and mercy.

O, that it might be granted to my thoughts to turn to One only, and that the strength of them all might be employed in burning in reverence before Thy Divine Self! Then might I say with the Prophet: "The thought of my heart is ever in Thy Presence." Would, O my God, that I were but a lamp burning on the altar of my soul, kindled with the fire of true love, and fed by all that I feel and hear of Thy wonderful perfection, that this perfection might be the most pure oil which of old Thou didst command to be burned in the Sanctuary. O, that it might please Thee, Lord, to afflict my soul with that chastisement of love concerning which Thou didst give warning by the prophet Hosea, saying: "I will hedge thy way with thorns, and with walls that thou canst not break down"; that is, I will place difficulties in all things, so that if thou dost seek other lovers, thou mayest never find them and so shalt return to Me. O, happy plight that compels the soul to seek only One that deserves to be loved.

Let us then make an end, O my soul, of vain reasonings. . . . If thou didst love thy God and Lord with great and true love, thou wouldst not have such anxious care for these outward things which so greatly disturb and distract thee. The more nearly our will attains to God, the farther it is withdrawn from our own selves. We ought therefore to keep it fixed and intent upon God, that we should be forgetful of all that is here below, and transformed, converted, and raised up into God. If I loved Thee in truth, O Lord, the power of love would make me to be as that which I love, for it would transform me into Thyself, that so I should be like unto That which I love. And if likeness be a cause of love, this love would be raised up and increased, rising with the homage of my soul and all that is within me, so that nothing should remain but that which is made captive by Thy love. Look, then, my soul, at thy Beauty and thou shalt understand what is that Beauty that thou must love. Thou hast a spouse and knowest Him not, and though He is the fairest of all things, thou lovest Him not because thou hast not seen His Face. If thou sawest Him thou wouldst not doubt concerning His beauty nor would any keep thee back from loving Him.

So great is the power of love that thou dost truly dwell where thy affections are fixed through contemplation. This is the Kingdom of God which is within thee, and which thou dost put from thee when thou lovest things that are without. If thou lovest this Kingdom of God, my soul, thou art queen in it, and having it within thee, thou hast the fruition of the infinite riches that the love of God brings with it. And if the better the things thou lovest, the better thou art, it follows clearly that if thou love heaven, thou art heavenly, and if thou set thy love on things of earth, thou art earthly. So, as love within my soul produces effects so marvellous, that I am transformed by love and become as that which I love, my heart, O Lord, shall love Thee even to the utmost of its power and strength and virtue, and in so far as it is able. For by this road I am brought to so lofty and noble an estate, and raised to a dignity so wonderful and supreme, that all created things which love Thee not are less than the heart which burns in Thy Divine love. . . .

Herein is revealed and declared a great dignity in man, namely, that through love he may be transformed and changed into anything that he desires, be it higher or lower than he. . . . So, then, if I may rise to such high dignity by means of love, it is right, my Lord and my God, that my heart should love Thee by night and by day all the days of my life. And if, O my soul, thou dost say that among all the pains and sorrows of this life thou canst not for sorrow rise to the love of thy God (as Aaron said, that for sadness of mind he could not make a feast to God), consider that these trials are blows of the steel that God gives to strike from the hard flint of thy heart sparks of fire and love, and that He afflicts thee that thou mayest love Him. For the most merciful Lord sees that thy heart is not softened by favours, and He wearies thee therefore with trials, that so thou mayest rise to Him through love, and, loving Him thus, acquire new honour and a new being, when thou art transformed through love into God.

IN A RUINED CHAPEL*

By Olive Schreiner

There are four bare walls; there is a Christ upon the walls, in red, carrying His cross; there is a Blessed Bambino with the face rubbed out; there is a Madonna in blue and red; there are Roman soldiers, and a Christ with tied hands. All the roof is gone; overhead is the blue, blue Italian sky; the rain has beaten holes in the walls, and the plaster is peeling from it. The chapel stands here alone upon the promontory, and by day and by night, the sea breaks at its feet. Some say that it was set here by the monks from the island down below, that they might bring their sick here in times of deadly plague. Some say that it was set here that the passing monks and friars, as they hurried by upon the roadway, might stop and say their prayers here. Now no one stops to pray here, and the sick come no more to be healed.

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* From "Dreams."

Behind it runs the old Roman road. If you climb it, and come and sit there alone on a hot, sunny day, you may almost hear at last the clink of the Roman soldiers upon the pavement, and the sound of that older time, as you sit there in the sun, when Hannibal and his men broke through the brushwood, and no road was.

Now it is very quiet. Sometimes a peasant girl comes riding by between her panniers, and you hear the mule's feet beat upon the bricks of the pavement; sometimes an old woman goes past with a bundle of weeds upon her head, or a brigand-looking man hurries by with a bundle of sticks in his hand; but for the rest, the chapel lies here alone upon the promontory, between the two bays, and hears the sea break at its feet.

I came here one winter's day when the midday sun shone hot on the bricks of the Roman road. I was weary, and the way seemed steep. I walked into the chapel to the broken window, and looked out across the bay. Far off, across the blue, blue water, were towns and villages, hanging white and red dots, upon the mountain-sides; and the blue mountains rose up into the sky, and now stood out from it, and now melted back again.

The mountains seemed calling to me, but I knew there would never be a bridge built from them to me; never, never, never! I shaded my eyes with my hand and turned away. I could not bear to look at them.

I walked through the ruined chapel, and looked at the Christ in red, carrying His cross, and the blessed rubbed-out Bambino, and the Roman soldiers, and the folded hands, and the reed; and I went and sat down in the open porch upon a stone. At my feet was the small bay, with its white row of houses buried among the olive trees; the water broke in a long, thin, white line of foam along the shore; and I leaned my elbows on my knees. I was tired, very tired; tired with a tiredness that seemed older than the heat of the day and the shining of the sun on the bricks of the Roman road; and I lay my head upon my knees; I heard the breaking of the water on the rocks three hundred feet below, and the rustling of the wind among the olive trees and the ruined arches; and then I fell asleep there. I had a dream.

A man cried up to God, and God sent down an angel to help him; and the angel came back and said, "I cannot help that man."

God said, "How is it with him?"

And the angel said, "He cries out continually that one has injured him; and he would forgive him, and he cannot."

God said, "What have you done for him?"

The angel said, "All——. I took him by the hand, and I said, 'See, when other men speak ill of that man, do you speak well of him; secretly, in ways he shall not know, serve him; if you have anything you value, share it with him; so, serving him, you will at last come to feel possession in him, and you will forgive.' And he said, 'I will do it.' Afterwards, as I passed by in the dark of night, I heard one crying out, 'I have done all. It helps nothing! If I share my heart's blood with him, is the burning within me less? I cannot forgive! Oh, God, I cannot forgive!'

"I said to him, 'See here, look back on all your past. See from your childhood all smallness, all indirectness that has been yours; look well at it, and in its light do you not see every man your brother? Are you so sinless you have right to hate?'

"He looked and said, 'Yes, you are right; I too have failed, and I forgive my fellow. Go, I am satisfied; I have forgiven;' and he laid him down peacefully and folded his hands on his breast, and I thought it was well with him. But scarcely had my wings rustled, and I turned to come up here, when I heard one crying out on earth again, 'I cannot forgive! I cannot forgive! Oh, God, God, I cannot forgive! It is better to die than to hate! I cannot forgive! I cannot forgive!' And I went and stood outside his door in the dark, and I heard him cry, 'I have not sinned so, not so! If I have torn my fellow's flesh ever so little, I have kneeled down and kissed the wound with my mouth till it was healed. I have not willed that any soul should be lost through hate of me. If they have but fancied that I wronged them, I have lain down on the ground before them that they might tread on me, and so, seeing my humiliation, forgive, and not be lost through hating me; they have not cared that my soul should be lost; they have not willed to save me; they have not tried that I should forgive them!'

"I said to him, 'See here, be thou content; do *not* forgive; forget this soul and its injury; go on your way. In the next world perhaps——'

"He cried, 'Go from me; you understand nothing! What is the next world to me! I am lost now, today. I cannot see the sunlight shine, the dust is in my throat, the sand is in my eyes! Go from me; you know nothing! Oh, once again before I die to see that the world is beautiful! Oh, God, God, I cannot live and not love. I cannot live and hate. Oh, God, God, God!' So I left him crying out, and came back here."

God said, "This man's soul must be saved."

And the angel said, "How?"

God said, "Go down you, and save it."

The angel said, "What more shall I do?"

Then God bent down and whispered in the angel's ear, and the angel spread out its wings and went down to earth.

And partly I woke, sitting there upon the broken stone with my head on my knee; but I was too weary to rise. I heard the wind roam through the olive trees and among the ruined arches, and then I slept again.

The angel went down and found the man with the bitter heart, and took him by the hand, and led him to a certain spot.

Now the man wist not where it was the angel would take him, nor what he would show him there. And when they came, the angel shaded the man's eyes with his wing, and when he moved it, the man saw somewhat on the earth before them. For God had given it to that angel to unclothe a human soul; to take from it all those outward attributes of form, and color, and age, and sex, whereby one man is known from among his fellows, and is marked off from the rest; the soul lay bare before them, bare, as a man turning his eye inward beholds himself.

They saw its past, its childhood, the tiny life with the dew upon it; they saw its youth when the dew was melting, and the creature raised its Lilliputian mouth to drink from a cup too large for it, and they saw how the water spilt; they saw its hopes that were never realized; they saw its hours of intellectual blindness men call sin; they saw its hours of all-radiating insight, which men call righteousness; they saw its hour of strength, when it leaped to its feet crying, "I am omnipotent;" its hour of weakness, when it fell to the earth and grasped dust only; they saw what it might have been, but never would be.

The man bent forward.

And the angel said, "What is it?"

He answered, "It is *I!* It is myself!"

And he went forward as if he would have lain his heart against it; but the angel held him back, and covered his eyes.

Now God had given power to the angel further to unclothe that soul, to take from it all those outward attributes of time, and place, and circumstance whereby the individual life is marked off from the life of the whole.

Again the angel uncovered the man's eyes, and he looked. He saw before him that which in its tiny drop reflects the whole universe; he saw that which marks within itself the step of the furthest star, and tells how the crystal grows under ground where no eye has seen it; that which is where the germ in the egg stirs; which moves the outstretched fingers of the little newborn babe, and keeps the leaves of the trees pointing upward; which moves where the jelly-fish sail alone on the sunny seas, and is where the lichens form on the mountain rocks.

And the man looked.

And the angel touched him.

But the man bowed his head and shuddered. He whispered, "*It is God!*"

And the angel re-covered the man's eyes. And when he uncovered them, there was one walking from them a little way off; for the angel had re-clothed the soul in its outward form and vesture—and the man knew who it was.

And the angel said, "Do you know him?"

And the man said, "I know him;" and he looked after the figure.

And the angel said, "Have you forgiven him?"

But the man said, "*How beautiful my brother is!*"

And the angel looked into the man's eyes; and he shaded his own face with his wing from the light. He laughed softly, and went up to God.

But the men were together on earth.

I awoke.

The blue, blue sky was over my head, and the waves were breaking below on the shore. I walked through the little chapel, and I saw the Madonna in blue and red, and the Christ carrying His cross, and the Roman soldiers with the rod, and the Blessed Bambino with its broken face; and then I walked down the sloping rock to the brick pathway. The olive trees stood up on either side of the road, their black berries and pale-green leaves stood out against the sky; and the little ice plants hung from the crevices in the stone wall. It seemed to me it must have rained while I was asleep. I thought I had never seen the heavens and the earth look so beautiful before. I walked down the road. The old, old, old tiredness was gone.

Presently there came a peasant boy down the path, leading his ass; she had two large panniers fastened to her sides; and they went down the road before me.

I had never seen him before; but I should have liked to walk by him, and to have held his hand—only he would not have known why.

Alassio, Italy.

THE SOUL

From the Enneads of Plotinus

First, then, let every soul consider that it is the Universal Soul which created all things, breathing into them the breath of life—into all living things which are on the earth, in the air, and in the sea, and the divine stars, the sun, and the great heaven—Itself conducting all their rhythmic motion.

The Soul must be more honorable than they, since they are born and perish, as the Soul grants them life and leaves them; but the Soul lives forever, and never ceases to be.

So let the soul that is not unworthy of that vision contemplate the Great Soul; freed from deceit and every witchery, and collected into calm. Calmed be the body for it in that hour, and the tumult of the flesh; ay, all that is about it, calm: calm be the earth, the sea, the air, and let heaven itself be still. Then let it feel how into that silent heaven the Great Soul floweth in.

Even as the bright beams of the sun enlighten a dark cloud, and give it a golden border, so the Soul, when It enters into the body of the heavens, gives it life and immortality, and awakens it from sleep.

So the world, guided in an eternal movement by the Soul which directs it, becomes a living and blessed being; and the heaven, when the Soul has made Its habitation, becomes a thing of worth.

The Soul is not divided, nor does It split Itself up in order to give life to each individual. All things live by the Soul in Its entirety; It is all present everywhere, both in Its unity and Its universality.

The heaven, vast and various as it is, is one by the power of the Soul, and by It is this universe of ours divine. The sun, too, is divine, being the abode of the Soul, and so are the stars; and we ourselves, if we are worth anything, are so in virtue of the Soul.

Now our soul is of one form with the Universal Soul; and if you remove from it all that is adventitious, and consider it in its state of purity, you will see how precious the essence of the soul is; far more precious than anything bodily.

Since, then, the soul is so precious and divine a thing, be persuaded that by it thou canst attain to God; with it, raise thyself to Him. Be sure that thou wilt not have to go far afield; there is not much between.

Take as thy guide in the ascent that which is more divine than this divine—that part of the soul which is next neighbor to That which is above, after which, and through which, the soul exists. For though the soul is so great a thing, it is no more than an image of the Divine Mind.

After having admired the world of sense, its grandeur and beauty, the eternal regularity of its movements, the celestial spirits and animals and plants which it contains, we may rise to the archetype of this world, a world more real than ours; we may there contemplate all the spiritual objects which are of their own nature eternal, and which exist in their own knowledge and life, and the pure Spirit which presides over them, and infinite Wisdom.

For It embraces in Itself all that is immortal, all Spirit, all that is God, all Soul, eternally unchanging. For why should That seek to change, in which all is well? And whither should That move, which holds all things within?

SPURIOUS PEACE

By Annie Payson Call

"*Non omne quod apparet, verum est.*"—Aristotle.

Spurious peace! Who wants it? Surely there is no one in the world who really wants it, if he knows it to be in his possession, and, at the same time, knows what it is. If I happen to own a gold-piece, and it shows every evidence of being what it is supposed to be, I value it for what I think it is. I may pass it in a shop for real gold. The shopkeeper believes it to be real gold, and pays a bill with it. So the gold-piece may be carried from one man to another without suspicion, until some possessor, still not suspecting, thinks of giving gold the acid test, and chooses this especial coin—expecting, of course, to prove it to be genuine. When the acid test is applied, to the owner's great surprise, the metal proves so much alloy that the coin could only be called counterfeit.

Now the owner may think that his coin has passed for so long as real that he is doing no one any harm to let more people believe that it is real, and he passes it on.

Or, the same man may be grateful that he has discovered a counterfeit, and—even though it means a loss to him—he will be interested and glad to stop its circulation, and to know that there is one less counterfeit coin deceiving people.

The analogy of this story of a seeming gold coin is so perfect in its application to spurious peace, that I am tempted to ask the reader to stop and think it out for himself. It is very interesting to do so, but if I go on thinking out at the end of my pen, it will, I hope, give rise to other suggestions which might not have been considered if the thought were led in different directions.

Never yet have I seen any one with spurious peace who knew it. More than that, the more spurious the peace is, the more angrily is the counterfeit rejected if any one suggests a suspicion of its reality.

It is certainly true that only God Himself can apply the acid test; sometimes He applies it through others—another one—another two—or even another many. Sometimes He applies it through happenings—through circumstances. *Always* He is applying the acid test to all His children, because He loves them so truly that He wants to free them from all touch of what is counterfeit.

The trouble is here: Many—and many who believe they have found peace—do not know the acid test when it comes to them. They are comfortable in their spurious peace, and when the test comes, instead of acknowledging the proof of counterfeit and going (as one might say) to the bottom, turning to God and beginning anew, they look the other way, and plunge again into their spurious peace—with the false comfort of forgetfulness.

One who looks with any depth into human actions can see just that going on over and over, especially when one has begun to recognize the acid tests that are sent to himself, and is thus in the process of seeing his own enemies, and, with God's help, putting them to rout.

Never—in this world—can we be where we are not given acid tests, but the discovery that these tests open our eyes to forms of selfishness in us that are exposed to our view, if we will see them, soon convinces us of the great blessing and power in acid tests.

Take your tests like a man. Let them expose to your view the first alloy in the gold that you firmly believed to be real, and then watch God's light coming to show you more clearly what you need to see in order to get your freedom. Watch your inner intelligence grow, and thank God for it, and for the power of use that comes with it.

It is very astonishing to see how people do not know themselves—extremely surprising! It is equally surprising to realize how we have never known ourselves until we have learned to take our acid tests, acknowledge the light that follows them, and let it enable us to see black as black, in order that we may the more clearly see white as white. After that we are ready always to be "found out," and are grateful for it.

There is no more perfect camouflage in all human nature than the camouflage of spurious peace. Spurious peace camouflages its owner to himself—and sometimes to all about him. Sometimes the test of ingratitude from others in response to true service that has been given pricks the camouflage, causes a slight conflagration within us, and reveals the peace we were resting in to be spurious. If we thank God for that revelation, find true repentance, and intelligently conquer our annoyance, knowing that we have not the slightest right to require gratitude from any one, we have taken one step away from the spurious and toward the real peace.

Such temptations to resentment and annoyance are constantly permitted to us; each one that we conquer from the roots in ourselves weakens the spurious and strengthens the real peace.

There is one thing to look out for, and to look out for *sharply*—spurious peace sugar-coats. If instead of facing an enemy within ourselves—facing him squarely, and conquering—we sugar-coat him and go on in "peace," we are laying up trouble for ourselves sooner or later.

If we do not want spurious peace, we must let all disagreeable, selfish feelings—all enemies—come to the surface, where we can see them for the black things they are, and, with God's help, conquer. Let us hope, too, that we can conquer before other people are troubled by them, or even see them.

Better, however, that they should be seen by others than pushed in the background and camouflaged or sugar-coated. That camouflage, or that sugar-coating, is a very *breeder* of spurious peace.

To be awake to our acid tests, to accept the proof they bring to us, when that which has appeared gold is *not* gold; to get free, little by little, step by step, from all alloy—that is the true path to real peace and steady destruction of the spurious. It brings a strong whiff of joy even to think of a progress like that. One does not care how slow it is, so long as it is real. And as the full sense of peace gradually grows upon us, we see that such peace is *not* ours, it is God's, and God gives it to us for His uses.

A loving and anxious mother wrote to her daughter:

"My dear daughter:

Why can't you have peace? I long that you should be at peace."

The daughter answered—with respect and with truth:

"Dear Mother:

I do not want peace until I have earned it."

And she has been working hard to take her tests and earn it; for that same daughter had a healthy dread of spurious peace.

Peace is, as the sage says, like a still lake that reflects all that is near and above it; and such stillness in the lake can reflect beautiful and real activity, an activity full of power for use.

One very interesting fact with regard to spurious peace is that the man or woman who possesses it does not use it consciously to deceive others. He is not necessarily in any way a hypocrite to others; his hypocrisy is aimed straight at himself; it is only himself he is deceiving.

A man might build a most beautiful appearing house on the sand and never discover it to be sand until "the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell." Then the discovery would have to come sharply and severely—that the house had no foundation. So spurious peace has no foundation whatever, and the rains and winds that come to test the foundation can rightly be compared to the acid test of the so-called gold coin.

Real peace is a rock, and no rains and winds can harm a character which is built on that foundation. Let us even pray for rains and winds, and be glad and grateful when they come to us and prove our house built upon the sand, for then we can arise and rebuild it.

Or, we can be equally grateful if tests come in petty details and prove our coin to be counterfeit; in our souls we can find the making of pure gold.

No one can see spurious peace in himself who is not willing and glad to see the worst of himself. I say *glad,* because only by seeing and acknowledging, and repenting of the worst, can we find the God-given best. That was truly and beautifully expressed in a paragraph of Eastern thought, quoted in a recent number of the "Message":

> "Every one wants to exhibit his good side and conceal his evils. Whoever can speak out his own faults frankly will get rid of them. It is not easy to confess so. If any one does so, know that he has worth in him."

Spurious peace stops our way; it is the unconscious pose of one who takes the line of least resistance. The true activity and ever-increasing power for use when peace is real is proven by the tranquil vitality that inevitably accompanies it.

IMPERISHABLE OM

The syllable OM or AUM is, for the Indo-Aryans, the sound symbol of the Absolute. From its opening vowel in the throat to its closing consonant on the lips this Great Sacred Word encompasses the whole range of articulate sound, even as that Infinite compasses in Its Oneness all manifestations. Only when we identify our life with That One, are we safe. So long as we think of ourselves as living in the senses, as hearing, seeing, tasting creatures, we are open to evil and its onslaughts. Our security lies in knowing that the Vital Breath, the Eternal Principle within us, the real Self, is identical with the Supreme. This thought is illustrated by the following parable taken from the Upanishads:

When the Devas and Asuras* struggled together, both of the race of Prajapati, the Devas took the *udgitha* (Om), thinking they would vanquish the Asuras with it.

They meditated on the *udgitha* (Om) as the breath (scent) in the nose, but the Asuras pierced it (the breath) with evil. Therefore we smell by the breath in the nose both what is good-smelling and what is bad-smelling. For the breath was pierced by evil.

Then they meditated on the *udgitha* (Om) as speech, but the Asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore we speak both truth and falsehood. For speech is pierced by evil.

Then they meditated on the *udgitha* (Om) as the eye, but the Asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore we see both what is sightly and unsightly. For the eye is pierced by evil.

Then they meditated on the *udgitha* (Om) as the ear, but the Asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore we hear both what should be heard and what should not be heard. For the ear is pierced by evil.

Then they meditated on the *udgitha* (Om) as the mind, but the Asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore we conceive both what should be conceived and what should not be conceived. For the mind is pierced by evil.

Then comes this Breath (of life) in the mouth. They meditated on the *udgitha* (Om) as that Breath. When the Asuras came to it, they were scattered, as a ball of earth would be scattered when hitting a solid stone.

Thus, as a ball of earth is scattered when hitting a solid stone, will he be scattered who wishes evil to one who knows this, or who persecutes him; for he is a solid stone. . . .

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*Angels and demons, or the forces of good and evil.

WHAT IS AGE?

Author Unknown

Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind. It is not a matter of ripe cheeks, red lips, and supple knees; it is a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is a freshness of the deep springs of life.

Youth means temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over love of ease. This often exists in a man of fifty more than in a boy of twenty.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years; people grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair—these make the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust.

Whether seventy or sixteen, there is in every being's heart the love of wonder, the sweet amazement at the stars and the starlike things and thoughts, the undaunted challenge of events, the unfailing childlike appetite for what next, and the joy and the game of life.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

In the central place of your heart there is a wireless station. As long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, courage, grandeur, and power from the earth, from men and from the Infinite, so long you are young.

When the wires are all down, and the central place of your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then are you old, indeed, and may God have mercy on your soul.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda spent the months of July and August at the Vedanta Centre of Boston. In spite of this summer period of rest and heat, the attendance showed increase rather than diminution. The Chapel was filled Sunday after Sunday, and many new friends added their fresh enthusiasm to the love and loyalty of the older members.

The new Ashrama at Cohasset, playfully called the "Baby Ashrama," has charmed all by its beauty. Saturday—Ashrama day—never failed to draw a goodly number of pilgrims, who, after the afternoon Service, lingered on for the sunset meditation and for the supper.

Two of Boston's leading journals—the *Herald* and the *Globe*—give colorful descriptions of the impression created by a first visit to the Ashrama. We quote in part.

Says the *Globe*: "The Cohasset Centre is unique in its isolation close to civilization. To get to it, one drives off the main highway. It is like driving down into Alice's rabbit hole, and the impression is carried out by the way in which the narrow woods trail winds and twists through a tunnel of green foliage. A short drive of this sort brings one to a daisy field. Seventy-five feet up in the air on a huge glacial bowlder is a portable house to which one climbs by winding steps cut out of the solid rock. Back of the house is another big rock deposit, and beyond that another—a series of huge bowlders like a miniature range of peaks—all of them buried in a sea of green. There is nothing in sight as far as one can see but the waving tree tops, and one can see a long distance. Here, in the woods, Swami Paramananda plans to establish a refuge from noise and confusion and hurry."

The *Herald's* description runs as follows: "Deep in the heart of the ancient Cohasset woods, Swami Paramananda has established his Ananda-Ashrama, which in English means "Peace Retreat." The name is well bestowed; here peace is indeed to be found. The place is roofed with bleached pine branches, through which the sunlight filters in soft shades of green. Columnar trunks of great trees support the vaulted ceiling, and, between them, vistas open ever farther into the forest. It is carpented with brown pine needles into which the foot sinks noiselessly. The only sound is the whisper of the wind through the boughs overhead, with perhaps the occasional twitter of a bird in the thicket.

"Here, once a week, comes Swami Paramananda, and holds a simple Service. It is a Service quite destitute of ritual or formality. The doctrine Swami preaches would not be inappropriate in any church or temple in the world. On a mossy bowlder, deposited there by some glacier in the ice age millions of years ago, a coronal of pine branches is the sole decoration of this woodland sanctuary.

"On a recent evening, a Sunset Service was held. It was a deeply impressive affair. The sun was dipping slowly to the western rim of the horizon. Grouped on the rock, enveloped in a stillness so profound that the drone of an airplane miles distant came faintly to where the worshipers sat, two women sang hymns, their plaintive voices sounding sweetly in the stillness. Then Swami read and talked, concluding with a few sentences in the sonorous Sanskrit. That was all. Presently the chatter of talk and the whirr of starting automobile motors brought every one back to the present and the here. Horns honked. The spell was over."

The Ananda-Ashrama in California, where Sister Daya has been conducting the Services and Classes during the summer, gave the Swami warm welcome on his return, September 6th. The morning of September 23rd, the Swami gave a devotional Address over Los Angeles radio station KNX, and on Sunday, September 29th, he inaugurated a series of lectures at Symphony Hall, 233 So. Hill St., Los Angeles, to be held every Sunday and Wednesday evening for three weeks.

The Boston work, during the Swami's absence, is in the capable hands of Srimati Charushila Devi, whose gentle presence is a real benediction.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

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Message of the East

NOVEMBER, 1929

Psychology of Thought

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Message of the East

> "And behold the glory of the God of
> Israel came from the way of the East."
> —*Ezekiel*
>
> "Light shall come again from the East."
> —*Tyndall*

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PSYCHOLOGY OF THOUGHT

By Swami Paramananda

ALL that we are is the result of what we have thought." This teaching, given by the Buddha to his followers, to my mind sums up the whole psychology of thought. Wherever we turn our eyes we can see its application. No man has ever done anything in this life without first conceiving it in his mind. Thought is like seed. When it is planted in the right soil and nurtured properly it grows, it blossoms forth, and we reap accordingly, whether we have sown the seed consciously or unconsciously. There is no such thing as chance in this great universe. There is order; there is law; and it is expressed in this theme that I have just given, "All that we are is the result of what we have thought."

Often we can tell a man's character by the look on his face. Our expression in great measure reveals what we are thinking. If some one asks you, "Why are you frowning?" you probably will reply, "I was not conscious that I was doing so." If, however, you can bring before you the thought that was in your mind, you will discover the cause of your smile or your frown. It is by these passing mental pictures that we sow the seed which comes to fruition as good or ill. We are not likely to blunder in the world unless we first blunder in our thought. If our thoughts are unguarded it will be very difficult for us to guard our actions. What we do can never be better nor bigger than what we think and are.

There is a simple saying which is often quoted, "Thoughts are things." To what extent this is true we do not realize. There can be obsession by a thought. It comes to us first as a fancy; we begin to play with it; we dwell on it more and more until finally it takes complete hold of the mind. Sometimes we are possessed by good thoughts, sometimes by evil. When noble, luminous, lofty thoughts possess us our actions are productive of great good; they bring blessing to us and to the world; they imbue even our everyday tasks with great power.

The success of our life depends on our thought. That is why the thoughtful mind is man's greatest friend, while the mind that is thoughtless is his greatest enemy. By thoughtless mind I mean a mind that is full of nonessentials, disorderly, and chaotic. Our life can become weighted down with thoughts which are not worth anything to ourselves or to others. Then, again, through our thoughts we can lift the weight of life. There is no limit to our thinking faculty. By means of it we can penetrate any realm of consciousness, from the material province and the intellectual to the mystic and the spiritual. It will carry us just as far as we want to go. It opens all departments of knowledge. Of course this point is not reached without great difficulty. One who is not used to thinking along these lines, if you place before him something of higher nature he will not be interested. Those who are dependent on others or on artificial means of entertainment, as soon as they are left alone feel terribly bored; they do not know what to do with their time; they grow nervous and restless. What does it indicate? The greatest possible impoverishment of the soul. On the other hand, people who have any inner resourcefulness welcome a moment of leisure or of silence when they can be alone.

In a household, we often scold a child who is unruly, impatient, and cross, and who is always demanding attention; yet often we behave just like that before our inner life is unfolded. Happiness will never be brought into our life through wealth or through any material possession, but only through this unfoldment of the inner nature. In the Vedic Upanishads it is stated simply and directly that mind is the cause of bondage and also that mind is the cause of freedom. It is so. A man distorted in mind can make himself very wretched; even sometimes he will take his own life. All forms of insanity, all tendencies to self-destruction come through distortion of the mind. Therefore, what is more needful for the individual than to keep the mind in order? The first step in this direction is the definite practice of *concentrated purpose*. I use this expression instead of "concentration" because that to which I refer is a greater practical viewpoint—not so much the fixing of the mind upon a subject as a coördinated feeling within, with no division of interest, no pulling aside of the mind by other influences. Here lies the difficulty in the individual life. We want to direct our thoughts toward a definite end, but our mind is being constantly diverted by our heart interests and by other aims. For this reason concentrated purpose is essential. Some people are born with it. They are always successful, no matter what they undertake; they lose themselves in every act, and that loss of self and self-consciousness is the secret of their success. We can verify this in the ordinary tasks of our domestic life. Whatever we do with wholeness of being will bring tremendous return. That is why the spirit of consecration is productive—because it unifies all our faculties and makes our effort one-pointed. Unfortunately, there is today a tendency to use these mental gifts for material prosperity. Concentrating on this thing or that, however, is far less practical than acquiring complete control over oneself. He who controls himself gains control in all things; whatever he undertakes he does with masterful attitude.

Without concentration there can be no meditation, and until one has found this gate to the inner life he can know no real inspiration, illumination, or peace. Average person either takes this in the abstract sense or else seeks to direct it toward some little personal advantage. When we understand the power of mind it may be a temptation to use it for our own benefit, but if we would touch real experience in meditation we shall have to rid ourselves of these ideas. There must be no sense of barter. To begin with, the mind has to be made still; and how can that be when it is constantly being ruffled by feelings of loss and gain, restlessness and desire, and petty calculation?

Picture to yourself a body of still water—a lake or river in the summer time. How inspiring it is to stand near it under the moon, or during the hour of twilight, and see in its depths the unbroken images of trees exactly reflected there! It becomes for us the symbol of the meditative mind, reflecting without any distortion. We must train ourselves in this faculty. The field of psychology is filled with various notions concerning it. We are asked to concentrate on an object, on our toe or some other part of the body. This is good, just as it is good for children to practice certain forms of gymnastics; but if we lose sight of our great purpose we gain nothing.

Take a noble, lofty thought and make it concrete through your thought. That is concentration. As you dwell upon it you will form an image in your mind, and if you continue to hold that image you will draw the subject ever closer and closer to you. You cannot concentrate on anything beautiful and beneficial without being helped by it. Whatsoever we constantly think upon, that we become. This is an absolute, practical fact. St. Francis, without analyzing methods of concentration, just from the pure vision that filled him, dreamed of nothing else but the Christ. And what happened? He began to resemble him; even his physical body changed. A tremendous thought current transforms one. In India this has always been recognized. A true disciple will resemble his master. You may have many defects, but if there is one who has surmounted these shortcomings—who stands before you as your ideal, inspiring your life and consciousness and awakening admiration, love, devotion—no matter what your drawbacks, thinking continually of that one, even unconsciously and without any effort, will bring about your transformation: gradually you will partake of his qualities. The idea is simple. All blemishes of body, mind, and heart can be dispelled by continued contact with something pure and effulgent. Meditation is not a cut-and-dried process. There are some people who find even more delight in it than a lover of music finds in a concert. When a sick person after a feverish night has his morning bath, what a fresh feeling it gives him. So is it with meditation—it refreshes the sick soul. We have, however, to formulate carefully our object of meditation; we have to choose that which gives the closest point of contact with the ideal. To the average person it will seem at first an arduous task; he will say, "I cannot fix my mind on anything so indefinite." Some one once said to me, "I do not know what these people mean when they talk about concentrating on Infinite Being." And I replied, "You do not concentrate on Infinite Being; you find some point where you can concentrate on a certain aspect of Infinite Being."

Our rational mind is always able to find a constructive basis for concentration. How shall we know what is constructive? We know that love is constructive. Its direct application brings tremendous healing; it builds up, and it inspires one with new faith and courage. If one could fortify oneself constantly with this element of love, not as an abstract theme, but as something to be made real in life, it would act as a natural safeguard for the individual. Instead of this loving attitude, however, we find the mind dwelling on things which are detrimental and destructive. You may say, "It is natural, when some one harms us or brings evil report, for the mind to dwell upon it." It may be natural; there are many disturbing elements—distractions of all kinds—but if we allow them to enter our mind and remain there, they will weaken us. Unfortunately, alien thoughts enter in even when we understand this principle and are firmly resolved. We hear a little gossip, nothing to do with us at all, but we allow it to be planted in our mind. Soon it assumes large proportions; we turn it over and over, and as it grows it undermines our mental faculties. This is a common occurrence in human experience, a very definite happening. That is why we must protect ourselves with some positive form of concentration.

Suppose that at these times, and in all circumstances, we were able to make instant appeal to that form of ideal upon which we have fixed our consciousness, would we not be fortified against all counter thoughts and feelings? There are devotees who counteract all evil through repeated prayer, or by the repetition of the Lord's Name. However, merely grasping these things intellectually and then putting them aside will not aid us. The devout form of spiritual living means daily contact and communion with the ideal. Here is where the Hindu excels; he will not even eat his food till he has had his meditation. This is what I mean by concentrated purpose—the constant focusing of the mind upon a spiritual point. Through physical, mental, and spiritual concentration we evolve the power of meditation—and meditation is a marvelous power, a real fulfillment. To be able to maintain one's equilibrium in the midst of all conditions—heat and cold, pleasure and pain, victory and defeat—gives one this power. One whose mind is not all the time fluctuating becomes meditative and full of peace; whereas one who is swept by small, trivial things, who makes no effort to acquire mental balance, cannot be saved from unhappiness.

No man can enjoy anything other than that to which he is accustomed. One of our great mystic teachers, Sri Ramakrishna, gives a parable showing how impossible it is for a man to appreciate something that is out of his province. It is a parable of a group of fishermen and women who were caught in a storm. Forced to seek shelter, they went to a florist's shop where beautiful roses and other fragrant flowers were kept, thinking that as soon as the storm ceased they would go home. But the storm kept on raging, and they were obliged to settle down for the night. They could not sleep, however; the fragrance of the flowers kept them awake. Finally, one who was more clever than the rest suggested that they bring in their fish baskets and sprinkle them with water. This was done, and soon, surrounded by the familiar odor of fish, they fell asleep.

People make their own environment. We may blame others—often we do—for our unhappiness; but no one can make us unhappy once we have established that rhythm that cannot be broken—the inward rhythm. Our greatest security lies there. It is like a wall of divine protection. We can create that wall by our own thoughts; also through our thought we can make ourselves vulnerable. Sometimes we see a man so susceptible that a single word will cause him to be impatient or hateful, while another person has fortified himself to such an extent that nothing in this world can overthrow him. These things, as I have said, do not happen by chance. If a man represents poise, quietude, calmness, and nobility, it is because he has formed the habit. It is largely a matter of habit. Let us take it on that ground. Whatsoever we constantly think upon, that we become. Everywhere we find the echo of this teaching; it is not peculiarly Indian, Christian, or Greek. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If he thinks vulgar, cruel thoughts, if he creates unloveliness, it will be impossible for him to know that which is lovely. Should he be taken to the highest heaven, he would find the place unbearable; by the very force of habit he would have to come down to another sphere where he would feel more at home.

There is nothing so beneficial as the company of good thoughts. We cannot take our accustomed setting with us, but we can always take our thoughts with us. It may not be so here, but in India it is quite customary for people, in the hour of need, to go to a sanctuary or some special shrine in order to find peace and upliftment. Yet from no outer shrine can we gain such perpetual benefit as from the shrine we carry within. The most wonderful things that man has ever produced have been created by thought; also all the diabolical, cruel, hideous things that take place have the same origin. Therefore, it is the mind that we must watch. The idea of meditation, prayer, consecration, or of any spiritual act is to govern the thought and tune it with the

Cosmic Spirit. Once we do that, there is no danger. Great souls do not follow their whims; they desire to turn their thinking faculty over to the Divine in order that whatever may rise in their mind may be the fulfillment of one great thought: Thy will be done in all things. This is the culmination of all thoughts. When we have exhausted our intellectual faculty and our own ingenuity, we come to see that our greatest protection is to think constantly of Him, and of Him alone. These hands are like servants: they follow the dictate of our will; our will is governed by our intelligence; and all these faculties—senses, will, mind—are directed by a higher Power. When through the assistance of our thought we connect ourselves with that Power, we become unshakable. Our first and foremost duty is to sanctify our thought. It is through thought that we find connection with Godhead. That is why wise men use this vital force for their own upliftment and for the upliftment of the world. Those who are spiritually minded lay emphasis upon the meditative habit.

First seek ye the Kingdom of God, all other things will be added unto you. The only means we have for seeking that Kingdom are the means of pure thought, prayer, meditation. We cannot travel there in any material conveyance or on these feet; but through noble instinct and high aspiration we ascend and find our access into that inmost shrine. Our trouble is, we want to take the path of unthinking and yet reap the highest results. This is not possible. If we reverse the order we have to take the consequences. The Law is there, stated very clearly, that if a man thinks and acts with kind intent, noble instinct, happiness will follow him everywhere, just as the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart; the two are inseparable.

These truths we must live; it is not enough simply to quote them. Those who are filled with love do not merely talk about love; they do something loving. Such people have neither caste nor creed; they belong to the family of the Awakened—the family of the Christ, of Lord Buddha, of St. Francis, and of all other saints and sages who have risen through thought unto God. Let us enlarge that family; it is needed in this world for the establishment of peace. Our clannish, racial feelings are not in accordance with God's highest law. Think, reflect, meditate, pray, direct your whole purpose toward the attainment of a great ideal, and you will realize that Oneness which is the ultimate goal of life, the background of all existence.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

If the thoughts of a man were so fixed on Brahman (the Supreme) as they are on the things of the realms of sense, who would not then be free from bondage?

—*Maitrayana Upanishad.*

Mental carelessness must take its place among the sins which men struggle against, and for which they repent.

—*Phillips Brooks.*

Such as thy thoughts and ordinary cogitations are, such will thy mind be in time. For the soul doth, as it were, receive its tincture from the fancies and imaginations.

—*Marcus Aurelius.*

One approximates the nature of the being one meditates upon. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

I go at what I am about as if there were nothing else in the world for the time being. That's the secret of all hardworking men. —*Charles Kingsley.*

CONCENTRATION AS POWER*

Mr. M. K. Wisehart interviews Dr. Frederick B. Robinson, President of the College of the City of New York.

[Mr. Wisehart was surprised, on visiting an art exhibition of the Brooklyn Etchers' Club, to see there an etching by Dr. Frederick Robinson, whom he had known for years. Until that moment he had not been aware that he was gifted along that line. He then learned that Dr. Robinson had also recently become a fair amateur musician, spurred on by friends, who, skeptical of his theory that, within certain limits, a man can accomplish anything he sets out to do, had suggested that he learn to play the 'cello within six months. Though entirely unfamiliar with musical instruments, he had given them a recital at the end of sixty days, playing with very fair skill such well-known compositions as Massenet's "Elegie," Handel's "Largo," and Mendelssohn's "Spring Song." Believing that in Dr. Robinson's power for rapid accomplishment there might lie a valuable lesson for his fellow men, Mr. Wisehart called upon him in order to learn "the secret."]

"There is no secret about the small measure of success I achieved," he said. "*I worked; I applied myself.* The important thing is that I have learned to love the 'cello. I have bought a real 'old master,' and look forward to studying under a professional teacher, and becoming a really good player."

"Concentration means more to you than to most of us," said Mr. Wisehart. "Just what is concentration?"

"I think of concentration as a kind of stamina, or mental tenacity, the result of a consistent purpose. It is the art of making our minds behave. It requires *choice*: fixing our mind and energies on *one* end to the exclusion of others.

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* Condensed from the American Magazine of Feb., 1929.

The men who achieve important positions in life depend less upon their natural aptitude than on this *acquired ability* to fix the attention upon any specific problem, and to hold the mind to that problem until they have seen it through.

"As to the mental processes involved in the act of concentration, the psychologists still are in the dark. We know no more about it than we do of electricity, but there are methods for the control and use of both. Not as a psychologist, but as a practical man, I have found four simple principles of great use to me in developing and applying my mental powers.

1 A keen and active interest—zest—in the subjects or task to be mastered is essential.
2 We must learn to amass in an orderly way the raw materials of thinking. *Get the facts!* Stress those which bear on the problem, and subordinate the others.
3 If we want to think and hit hard, we must learn to 'take it easy.' That is to say, the most *efficient* use of our mental and physical energy is likewise the most economical.
4 There is evidently something in the mind which, after a sustained effort, becomes temporarily exhausted, but recovers and goes on trying, so that the ultimate solution of the problem may come in an altogether unexpected way. To a certain extent, we can *make the subconscious work for us.*

"The first principle concerns interest. I made progress in becoming an amateur etcher and 'cellist because I was naturally interested. But if I had not been keenly interested naturally, I feel certain that I could have found ways and means of stimulating the interest necessary to make my efforts effective. It is often necessary to look forward to desired results rather than feeling only the drudgery of the moment.

"My second principle is to get the facts. Remember that when the mind is 'going in circles,' over and over the same matter, without new ideas occurring to us or our conclusions sharpening, the cause presumably is a lack of information on which a definite decision could be based. *Successful results cannot be obtained from an effort of the will in a vacuum.*

"Let me illustrate my third principle: When I was a young man, working under pressure, and attempting to accomplish varied tasks in the shortest possible time, I used to rush at them and get 'steamed up.' Later, I learned that this was not the way in which really effective men handle themselves. Rather, such men are completely at their ease, even under urgent and distracting circumstances.

"There is a judge whose mind I have watched in action. How easily it travels along with the thread of counsel's argument, even in the midst of exciting disputes! Never disturbed, he takes things easily, in his quiet, even way asking a question now and then. When doing our hardest thinking, there should be a general relaxation and serenity of body and mind, but with a deliberate focusing of the mind, and a maximum of intensity in *one* direction.

"In my own experience I have found it useful—when I have long been working on some particular question and find myself getting high-strung and tense—to pause deliberately in my speech or meditations, relax, breathe deeply, and simply wait till the tense condition has abated.

"Of equal importance with this principle of relaxation is another: too long a study of one problem may cause the mind to go 'stale.' Physical diversion, or a change in the form of our mental activity, may pave the way for a solution of some long-pondered problem. As students, many of us have had this experience: after working hard at night on a particular problem, we have solved it with ease the next morning. Such work, accomplished by the mind without our consciously directing its activities, would appear to be the very opposite of concentration. But remember that without the intense, concentrated effort that went before, such flashes of insight are not apt to occur.

"One of the best exercises I know of for actually developing skill in concentration, for young and old, is to read carefully a paragraph of a book, then turn the book down and name the essential points covered in that paragraph. Once you can do this with a short paragraph, practice doing the same with a longer paragraph, and then several paragraphs. Or jot down the main points of an address by a speaker, and when the address is over, with these points memorized, develop the speech over again in your own way.

"It is well to recall what notable men have said on this subject of concentrated energy. Under all these sayings one may see a common denominator of meaning and emphasis; namely, that the great difference between those who achieve and those who fail consists not so much in the amount of time devoted to work by each, but in the degree to which he intelligently applies his powers, mental and physical, to one purpose."

He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' the center, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the midday sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

—*John Milton.*

COUNSEL OF PERFECTION*

From the Dina-i Mainog-i Khirad,
The Opinions of the Spirit of Wisdom
A Persian Scripture based upon the Avesta, 580-599 A.D.

Him who is less superior than thee consider as an equal, and an equal as a superior.

Indulge thee not in wrathfulness; for when a man indulges in wrath he becometh then forgetful of his duty and good works, of prayer, and the service of the sacred beings; and sin and crime of every kind occur to his mind; and until the subsiding of his wrath, he may be said to be like Ahriman (the Spirit of Evil).

Thou shouldst not be too much arranging the world; for the world-arranging man becometh spirit-destroying.

Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through much treasure and wealth; for it is necessary for thee to leave all in the end.

Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through great connections and race; for in the end thy trust is in thine own deeds.

Thou shouldst not become presumptuous through life; for death cometh upon thee at last, and the perishable part falleth to the ground.

* * * * *

The sage asked the Spirit of Wisdom: How is it possible to make Ahura Mazda, the archangels, and the fragrant, well-pleasing heaven more fully for oneself?

The Spirit of Wisdom answered thus: When they make the spirit of wisdom a protection for the back, and wear the spirit of contentment on the body, like arms and armor and valor, and make the spirit of truth a shield, the spirit of thankfulness a club, the spirit of complete-mindfulness a bow, and the spirit of liberality an arrow; the spirit of moderation a spear, the spirit of perseverance a gauntlet, and put forth the spirit of destiny as a protection. In this manner it is possible to come to heaven and the sight of the sacred beings.

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* From "Tongues of Fire," after the translation by E. W. West.

The sage asked the Spirit of Wisdom: Which is that good work which is greater than all good works?

The Spirit of Wisdom answered thus: To be grateful in the world, and to wish happiness to every one. This is greater and better than every good work, and no commotion whatever is necessary for its performance.

WHAT I BELIEVE*

By Robert Andrews Millikan

(Dr. Millikan was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1923 for isolating and measuring the electron.)

There are three ideas which seem to me to stand out above all others in the influence they have exerted and are destined to exert upon the development of the human race. . . . The first of these, and the most important of the three, was the gift of religion to the race; the other two sprang from the womb of science. They are the following—

1 The idea of the Golden Rule;
2 The idea of natural law;
3 The idea of age-long growth, or evolution.

The first idea—namely, that one's own happiness, one's own most permanent satisfactions are to be found through trying to forget oneself and seeking, instead, the common good—is an altruistic ideal so contrary to the immediate promptings of the animal within us that it is not strange that it found little place in the thinking or acting of the ancient world, or, for that matter, in the acting of the modern world either, in spite of the professions of Christianity. There will be common consent, however, that the greatest, most consistent, most influential proponent of this idea who has ever lived was Jesus of Nazareth. Buddha, Confucius, Socrates, all had now and then given voice to it, but Jesus made it the sum and substance of his whole philosophy of life. When he said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets," I take it that he meant by that last phrase that this precept epitomized in his mind all that had been commanded and foretold—that it embodied the summation of duty and of aspiration.

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* From an article in the "Forum" (Oct., 1929).

Now, when the life and teachings of Jesus became the basis of the religion of the whole Western World, an event of stupendous importance for the destinies of mankind had certainly taken place, for a new set of ideals had been definitely and officially adopted by a very considerable fraction of the human race. . . .

The significance of this event is completely independent even of the historicity of Jesus. The service of the Christian religion and my own faith in essential Christianity would not be diminished one iota if it should in some way be discovered that no such individual as Jesus ever existed. If the ideas and ideals for which he stood sprang up spontaneously in the minds of men without the stimulus of a single great character, the result would be even more wonderful and inspiring than it is now, for it would mean that the spirit of Jesus is actually more widely spread throughout the world than we realize. In making this statement, I am endeavoring to say just as positively and emphatically as I can that the credentials of Jesus are found wholly in his teachings and in his character as recorded by his teachings, and not at all in any real or alleged historical events.

And in making that affirmation, let me also emphasize the fact that I am only paraphrasing Jesus' own words when he refused to let his disciples rest his credentials upon a sign.

My conception, then, of the essentials of religion, at least of the Christian religion, is that they consist in just two things: first, in inspiring mankind with the Christlike ideal—that is, the altruistic ideal which means, specifically, concern for the common good as contrasted with one's own individual impulses and interests, wherever in one's own judgment the two come into conflict; and second, inspiring mankind to do, rather than merely to think about, its duty, the definition of duty for each individual being what he himself conceives to be for the common good. In three words, I conceive the essential task of religion to be "to develop the *consciences*, the *ideals*, and the *aspirations* of mankind."

It is very important to notice that in the definitions I have given, duty has nothing to do with what somebody else conceives to be for the common good . . . The question of what actually is for the common good is the whole stupendous problem of science or of knowledge in the broad sense of that term; it has nothing to do with religion or with morals as I am using these words. There are only two kinds of immoral conduct. The first is due to indifference, thoughtlessness, failure to reflect upon what is for the common good; in other words, careless, impulsive, unreflective living on the part of people who know that they ought at least to try to think things through. I suspect that ninety-nine per cent of all immorality is of this type. . . . The second type of immorality is represented by "the unpardonable sin" of which Jesus spoke—deliberate refusal, after reflection, to follow the light when seen.

Thus far I have been dealing only with what seem to me to be obvious facts—mere platitudes, if you will—for the sake of not being misunderstood when I speak about the essentials of religion. I am not at this moment concerned with how far the *practice* of religion has at times fallen short of the ideals stated in the foregoing essentials. I am now merely reaffirming the belief with which I began: that the discovery of the foregoing ideals and their official adoption as the basis of the religion of the Western World has within the past two thousand years exercised a stupendous influence upon the destinies of the race. . . . If the influence of American churches in the furtherance of socially wholesome and forward-looking movements, in the spread of conscientious and unselfish living of all sorts, were to be eliminated, it is my belief that our democracy would in a few years become so corrupt that it could not endure. . . .

Thus far I have presented the most conspicuous contribution of religion to the development of the race. I now turn to the two major contributions of science to human progress. The ancient world, in all the main body of its thinking, believed that God, or Nature, or the Universe, whichever term you prefer, was a being of caprice and whim. Today, however, we think of a God who rules through law, or a Nature capable of being depended upon, or a Universe of consistency, of orderliness, and of the beauty that goes with order. This idea has *made* modern science, and it is unquestionably the foundation of modern civilization. Because of this discovery, or because of the introduction of this idea into human thinking, and because of the *faith* of the scientist in it, he has been able to harness the forces of nature and to make them do the work that enslaved human beings were forced to do in all preceding civilizations.

Yes, and much more than this . . . It has also revolutionized the whole mode of thought of the race. It has changed the philosophical and religious conceptions of mankind. It has laid the foundations for a new and stupendous advance in man's conception of God, for a sublimer view of the world, and of man's place and destiny in it. . . . The new God is the God of law and order; the new duty, to know that order and to get into harmony with it, to learn how to make the world a better place for humanity to live in, not merely how to save your individual soul. . . .*

I am not worrying here over the recent introduction of the so-called "principle of uncertainty" in microscopic processes—an event that is causing so much excitement among physicists just now. This may indeed be consoling, or, at least, illuminating to those non-physicists who have been worrying their heads over their inability to reconcile the principle of law with the facts of free will and of responsibility. . . .

But I don't think this particular problem ever worried the physicist, for he has always known that his ignorance was as yet quite ample enough to cover the links in the reconciliation that must exist. Eighteenth and nineteenth century materialism never had any lure for him, for it always represented quite as pure dogmatism—assertiveness without knowledge—as did medieval theology, and modern developments have pushed it completely out of sight. For *matter* is no longer a mere game of marbles played by blind men. An atom is now an amazingly complicated *organism*. possessing many interrelated parts and exhibiting many functions and properties—energy properties, radiating properties, wave properties, and other properties quite as mysterious as any that used to masquerade under the name of "mind." Hence the phrases—"All is matter," and "All is mind"—have now become mere shibboleths completely devoid of meaning. . . .

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* Concerning what ultimately becomes of the individual in the (evolutionary) process, science has added nothing and it has subtracted nothing. So far as science is concerned, religion can treat that problem precisely as it has in the past, or it can treat it in some entirely new way if it wishes. For that problem is entirely outside the field of science now, though it need not necessarily always remain so.—Robert A. Millikan, "Evolution in Science and Religion," Yale University Press, 1927.

The third, or evolutionary idea, is the youngest of the two great ideas born of modern science. It is not yet one hundred years old. Introduced by Darwin solely in its application to biological evolution, the evolutionary theory has come to dominate in a very broad way almost every aspect of human thought as discovery after discovery in modern science has pushed back farther and farther the age of the stars, the age of the solar system, the age of the earth, the age of the rocks, of fossil life, of prehistoric man, of recorded history, of social institutions. Thus we have discovered that our social institutions have evolved through a process identical with that which governed the evolution of biological forms. . . .

Again, because of the growth of this evolutionary idea in human thinking, we have come to see that an institution like religion, in so far as it deals with conceptions of God—the integrating factor in this universe not merely of atoms but of ether and of mind, ideas, duties, and intelligence—has not been and cannot be a fixed thing; that it has been continually changing with the growth of human knowledge; and that it will continue to expand as knowledge continues to grow.

I have thus presented the most outstanding contribution of religion to human progress, and the two most representative and significant contributions of science. We are now ready to ask how they are interrelated. The answer is quite obvious. The world of science, dominated by the reign of law, has necessitated the increasing association of men into coöperating groups; but the effectiveness of those groups—indeed, the whole group life—becomes at once impossible unless the altruistic ideal of religion, the sense of social responsibility, permeates the whole; while the evolutionary concept is absolutely essential to an understanding of the development both of religion and of science. . . .

Whence, then, arises this strange idea, so often heard in popular discussions, of an incompatibility between science and religion? Here again I think the answer is clear. There is obviously no incompatibility between science and *the essentials of religion* as I have defined them. But individual religions, or branches of a religion, often contain more than these essentials. Every movement which becomes popular and gains large numbers of adherents inevitably draws into itself men who are not actuated solely, or even at all, by its ideals, but who use it to further their own ends. . . .

Again, the anticlerical parties in many countries today represent, in part, the efforts of real reformers to break the *political* power of groups that have seized it and hold it in the *name* of religion, when the real issues obviously have nothing whatever to do with religion. . . . If you and I lived in some countries today, I have no doubt that we should be in the anticlerical groups; but it would not be because we had lost confidence in the essentials of religion, but rather because we thought that these essentials had become so buried under excrescences of the kind I have been describing that the net result was harmful rather than socially helpful. . . . I have introduced the subject merely to show how the essentials of religion may, and sometimes do, become lost in the *organization* of religion. . . .

But by the very same method described above in the discussion of politics and religion, there has grown up, as I think, another excrescence upon the essentials of religion which introduces us at once into the very heart of the alleged conflict between science and religion. This has come about not so much because of the selfishness and ambition of men (real motives, though often masked even in the minds of their possessors under softer names), as through the ignorance of men. The amazing insight of Jesus is revealed in his having kept himself free from creedal statements, particularly statements that reflected the state of man's knowledge or ignorance of the universe that was characteristic of his times. In spite of our enormously increased knowledge of the universe, a large part of his sayings seem to be just as true now as they seemed to be then. The things that a man does not say often reveal the understanding and penetration of his mind even more than the things he says. The fact that Jesus confined himself so largely to the statement of truths that still seem to us to have eternal value is what has made him a leader and teacher of such supreme influence throughout the centuries.

But throughout the past two thousand years, his followers, unlike him, have, in many instances, *loaded* their various branches of his religion with creedal statements which are full of their own woefully human frailties. The difference is so enormous as to justify calling his statement Godlike in comparison. For what are these man-made creeds? Admittedly they have been written by men, or groups of men called together for the purpose—men so uninspired that very few of them have ever left any lasting memory of themselves. How many people now know of any name that was ever associated with any one of them? In their creeds these men have often reflected in detail the state of knowledge, or the state of ignorance, of the universe, or of God—whichever term you prefer—characteristic of their times. If some one wishes me to change this implied definition of Deity so as to make it read, "the unifying principle in the universe," I shall not object; for there *is* a unity, an interrelatedness, a wholeness to it all, we ourselves being but parts of that whole, and this is attested by all experience, including the amazing new scientific developments in the fields of ether physics, relativity, and wave-mechanics. This is only my prosaic paraphrase of the lines of Tennyson, the poet of science, when he says:

> The sun, the moon, the stars, the hills and the plains,
> Are not these, O Soul, the vision of Him who reigns?
> The ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
> But if we could see and hear this vision—were it not He?
> Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit shall
> meet.
> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

Now with the conception of God changing continuously as man has grown in knowledge, from the time when he pictured his God in the form of a calf, or a crocodile, or a monstrous man, to the time when the poet described God as the Soul of the Universe—what must be the relation between science, or the ever-expanding knowledge of man, and the long since vanished conceptions of the universe or of God, frozen in ancient man-made creeds? Obviously one of inescapable conflict. And in so far as these creedal excrescences have covered up, or displaced, the essentials of religion, there are obviously no alternatives except (1) to remove that sort of a deadening growth from the heart of religion, or, failing that, either (2) to desert a hopeless religion or (3) to give up science.

A choice between the last two alternatives might be a necessity in some countries. Fortunately, no such choice is necessary in the United States. Since this nation is the widest flung democracy in the world, it needs—indeed, it must have—the essentials of religion more than any other country if it is to endure; and with us religion has been able to develop wholly untrammeled by political interference, and in many of its branches it has been absolutely free to evolve without the restraining influence of central authority. . . .

Within the United States, then, there is not the slightest reason why religion cannot keep completely in step with the demands of our continuously growing understanding of the world. Here religious groups are to be found which correspond to practically every stage in the development of our knowledge and understanding. Personally, I believe that essential religion is one of the world's supremest needs, and I believe that one of the greatest contributions that the United States ever can, or ever will, make to world progress —greater by far than any contribution which we ever have made, or can make, to the science of government—will consist *in furnishing an example to the world of how the religious life of a nation can evolve intelligently, inspiringly, reverently, completely divorced from all unreason, all superstition, and all unwholesome emotionalism.*

Go your way and mind your business—the business of growth and development. For that is the business of every living soul. If you find it hard to believe in any power greater than your own mind, in any life beyond this earth, keep silent and wait. Do not put yourself on record as an aggressive unbeliever. For sooner than the wisest of us dreams "the murmur of the Gods" may become audible to human ears. The vast spaces about us are quivering with unuttered secrets, and there is a hush of expectancy in the air. "Science is organized knowledge" and what the seers have long known, science is upon the eve of proving. Be ready to receive the knowledge when it is given to you. Today, as never before, skepticism brands a human being with ignorance. Be still and wait.—*Maurice Maeterlinck.*

MYSELF AND OTHERS

By Arnold Bennett

Let me examine honestly my mental processes, and I must admit that my attitude toward others is entirely different from my attitude toward myself. I must admit that in the seclusion of my mind, though I say not a word, I am constantly blaming others because I am not happy. Whenever I bump up against an opposing personality and my smooth progress is impeded, I secretly blame the opposer. I act as though I had shouted to the world: "Clear out of the way, every one, for I am coming!" Every one does not clear out of the way. I did not really expect every one to clear out of the way. But I act within as though I had so expected. I blame. Hence kindliness, hence cheerfulness, is rendered vastly more difficult for me.

What I ought to do is this: I ought to reflect again and again, and yet again, that the beings among whom I have to steer, the living environment out of which I have to manufacture my happiness, are just as inevitable in the scheme of evolution as I am myself; have just as much right to be themselves as I have to be myself; are precisely my equals in the face of Nature; are capable of being explained as I am capable of being explained; are entitled to the same latitude as I am entitled to; and are no more responsible for their composition and their environment than I for mine. I ought to reflect again and again, and yet again that they all deserve from me as much sympathy as I give to myself. Having thus reflected in a general manner, I ought to take one by one the individuals with whom I am brought into frequent contact, and seek, by a deliberate effort of the imagination and the reason, to understand them, to understand why they act thus and thus, what their difficulties are, what their "explanation" is, and how friction can be avoided. Here is a course of discipline. If I follow it I shall gradually lose the preposterous habit of blaming, and I shall have laid the foundations of that quiet, unshakable self-possession which is the indispensable preliminary of conduct according to reason, of thorough efficiency in the machine of happiness.

AMERGIN

Anonymous

[In anthologies this poem is grouped with the old English poems, but its date is unknown. Students of the Hindu Scriptures will be interested to note how it parallels certain portions of the Bhagavad-Gita.]

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the billows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valour.
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of science,
I am the point of the lance in battle,
I am the God who creates in the head the fire.
Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?

THE WAY OF DETACHMENT

From the Teachings of Gautama Buddha

[One of the most vital concepts of the Vedanta philosophy is the concept of the Supreme Self, the innermost Spirit in man, as the Witness, detached from body and from all the thoughts and feelings which arise in the mind and heart. If the individual can identify his consciousness with that Spirit, then is he free from the tyranny of his physical and mental limitations.

In connection with this, the following teaching of the Lord Buddha contains valuable hints. Body, thoughts, feelings, ideas hold us in thrall so long as we identify ourselves with them. When, however, we can stand apart from them, as the Buddha suggests, establishing our true entity elsewhere, from that moment we become the master in our own house—a liberated being whom nothing can overthrow.]

Once the Exalted One was staying among the Kurus—there is a suburb of the Kurus called Kammassa-dhamma. There the Exalted One called to the brethren and said, "Brethren!" "Yes, Lord!" replied those brethren to the Exalted One.

Then the Exalted One thus spake:

"This is the Only Way, brethren, that leads to the purification of beings, to passing beyond sorrow and lamentation, to the destruction of grief and despair, to the attainment of the Method, to the realizing of Nirvana, thus: The Four Ways of Establishing Mindfulness. What are the four?

"Herein, brethren, a brother abides regarding Body (as a compound); he is ardent, self-possessed, and concentrated by controlling the covetousness and dejection that are in the world. So also with regard to Feelings and Thought and Mental States (Ideas).

The Contemplation of Body

"And how, brethren, does a brother abide regarding body (as a compound)?

"In this method, brethren, a brother goes to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to a lonely place, and there sits down cross-legged, and holds his body straight, establishing concentration in front of him. Then he breathes in mindfully, and mindfully breathes out. As he draws a long breath he knows, 'A long breath I draw in.' As he breathes out a long breath he knows, 'A long breath I breathe out. . . .'

"Thus he abides regarding body either in its inner or in its outer state or in both. . . . Or else with the thought, 'It is body,' his mindfulness of body is established, just sufficiently for him to know its existence, and to become concentrated. Thus he abides detached, and he grasps at nothing at all in the world.

"Thus, brethren, does a brother abide in the Contemplation of Body.

The Contemplation of Ideas

"In this method, brethren, a brother when feeling a pleasant feeling is aware, 'I feel a pleasant feeling'; or when feeling a painful feeling is aware, 'I am feeling a painful feeling'; or when the feeling is neither pleasant nor painful is aware, 'I am feeling a neutral feeling. . . .'

"Thus, inwardly or outwardly or both, he abides contemplating his feelings . . . and he grasps at nothing at all in the world.

"That, brethren, is how a brother abides in the Contemplation of Feelings.

The Contemplation of Thought

"And how, brethren, does a brother abide in the Contemplation of Thought as such? In this method, a brother is aware of a passionate thought that it is passionate;

of a dispassionate thought that it is dispassionate. Of a hateful thought he is aware that it is hateful; of a thought free from hate he is aware that it is so. Of a confused thought he is aware that it is confused, and of a clear thought he is aware that it is clear. Of a concentrated thought he is aware that it is concentrated, and of a diffuse thought he is aware that it is diffuse. Of a lofty thought he is aware that it is lofty; of a low thought he is aware that it is low. . . .

"Thus, either inwardly or outwardly, or both inwardly and outwardly, he abides contemplating thought . . . and he grasps at nothing at all in the world.

"That is how, brethren, a brother abides, as regards thought, in the Contemplation of Thought.

The Contemplation of Ideas

"And how, brethren, does a brother, as regards ideas, abide in the Contemplation of Ideas? . . .

"In this method, brethren, a brother is aware of an inner sensual desire that it is sensual, and when he has no inner sensual desire, he is aware of it. . . .

"So also with regard to Ill-will, Sloth and Torpor, Excitement and Worry, and Wavering. Of each of these he is aware in the same way. . . .

"Thus, inwardly or outwardly or both, he abides in the Contemplation of Ideas. . . . His mindfulness about Ideas is established just sufficiently for him to know their existence and to become concentrated. Thus does he abide detached, and he grasps at nothing at all in the world.

"That is how, brethren, a brother abides, as regards Ideas, in the Contemplation of Ideas. . . .

The Four Aryan Truths

"Then lastly, brethren, with regard to Ideas, a brother abides in the Contemplation of Ideas by way of the Four

Aryan Truths. And how does he so abide?

"In this method, brethren, a brother is aware, as it really is, 'This is Ill. This is the arising of Ill, as it really is. This is the ceasing of Ill, as it really is. This is the Way to the Ceasing of Ill, as it really is.'

"Now whosoever, brethren, shall thus practice these Four Ways of Establishing Mindfulness for seven years (at most), may look to win one of two fruits: either in this very life he wins the Knowledge, or, if there be still a residue of him, he wins the Fruit of Not-returning.

"But let alone seven years, brethren, whosoever shall thus practice the Four Ways of Establishing Mindfulness for six years, for five, four, three, two, one year—nay, whosoever shall thus practice them for seven months, for even one month, for half a month, nay, even for seven days—he shall win one of two Fruits: either in this very life he shall win the Knowledge, or, if there be still a residue of him, he shall win the Fruits of Not-returning.

"This, brethren, is what I meant when I said before, 'This is the Only Way that leads to the purification of beings, to passing beyond sorrow and lamentation, to the destruction of grief and despair, to the attainment of the Method, to the realization of Nirvana; namely, The Four Ways of Establishing Mindfulness.' "

REPORT

The eight weeks of Swami Paramananda's sojourn in California were exceedingly active ones, although the Swami confined his time almost wholly to the needs of his own work and workers. With two, and sometimes three, lectures on Sunday and three public Classes a week, in addition to numberless interviews and outside demands, every moment was completely filled.

The Services were held under the shade of the spreading acacia tree or in the Temple of the Universal Spirit where, in spite of the intense heat and the long upgrade to the Ashrama, many came to listen to the Swami and found in his inspiring words both physical and spiritual refreshment.

The most important event that took place during the month of October at the Ananda-Ashrama was the celebration of the Divine Mother Feast—or, as it is popularly known in India, *Durga Puja.* This was observed from the evening of the ninth until the evening of the thirteenth, and every day a great deal of time was devoted to prayer, meditation, and the singing of holy songs. This created a spiritually charged atmosphere which was felt by every one who entered the Temple. The Swami gave several public evening addresses during the occasion, and many motor cars were seen climbing the steep Ashrama road. On the eighteenth of October there was a full-moon Service and afterwards an open reception when Ashrama members entertained the guests with music, dancing, and refreshments. There is something very magical at the hour of nightfall on this hilltop where the Ashrama is situated, and people who participate in any of these spiritual or social functions never forget the charm of it.

We are glad to announce that a suitable Centre has been secured in the heart of Los Angeles, 745 West Adams Street, where the principal public activities will be carried on. Swami Paramananda expects to dedicate this place about the middle of December upon his return from the East. For a long time a keen want has been felt by many for such a Centre. The Ashrama maintained libraries in both Los Angeles and Pasadena in order to satisfy the demand of the people, but we are hoping that this new Centre will mean much greater helpfulness and blessing to many spiritually hungry souls.

During the Swami's absence from California, all the activities of the Ananda-Ashrama are ably conducted by the Sisters and Brothers of the Ashrama. The Services and Classes are conducted by Sister Daya and Gayatri Devi.

The work of the Vedanta Centre of Boston during the months of September and October were conducted by Charushila Devi. She has drawn many to her by the fire of her consecration and her simple devotion. During the winter months all public activities at the Cohasset Ashrama will be suspended.

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Message of the East

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*

"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*

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ON THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

From the Ritual of the Omaha Indians

(On the eighth day following the birth of a child, the priest took his place at the entrance to the tent and intoned the following prayer.)

HO! Ye Sun, Moon, Stars, all that move in the heavens, I bid you hear me! Into your midst hath come a new life. Consent ye, I implore! Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the first hill!

Ho! Ye Winds, Clouds, Rain, Mist, all ye that move in the air, I bid you hear me! Into your midst hath come a new life. Consent ye, I implore! Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the second hill!

Ho! Ye Hills, Valleys, Rivers, Lakes, Trees, Grasses, all ye of the earth, I bid you hear me! Into your midst hath come a new life. Consent Ye, I implore! Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the third hill!

Ho! Ye birds, great and small, that fly in the air; ho, ye animals great and small, that dwell in the forest; ho, ye insects that creep among the grasses and burrow in the ground, I bid you hear me! Into your midst hath come a new life.

Consent ye, I implore! Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the fourth hill!

Ho! All ye of the heavens, all ye of the air, all ye of the earth, I bid you all hear me! Into your midst hath come a new life. Consent ye all, I implore! Make its path smooth, then shall it travel beyond the four hills.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The Tao which originated all under the sun is to be considered as the Mother of them all. When the Mother is found we know what Her children should be. When one knows that He is his mother's child, and proceeds to guard the qualities of the mother that belong to him, to the end of his life he will be free from all peril. —*Tao-Teh King*

God, my Creator, stand by my side! Keep Thou the door of my lips, guard Thou my hands, O Lord of Light!

—*Accadian Prayer*

When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

—*Emerson*

Your gentleness shall force more than your force move us to gentleness. —*Shakespeare*

Can a woman forget her sucking child that she would not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. —*Isaiah*

Amen, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it.

—*Jesus the Christ*

The first thing the soul must have in order to attain the knowledge of God, is the knowledge of itself.

—*St. John of the Cross*

GIFT OF LOVE

By Swami Paramananda

Let us lift our thoughts and prayers to the one unfailing
Source of life, of inspiration, of joy, and of peace.
Let us open all the avenues of our mind, heart, and soul
That He, the Great Sun, may fill us with the radiance of life and light,
Healing our wounds, and removing our unhappiness.
O Thou Infinite, All-effulgent Spirit,
Father and Mother of us all,
Do Thou manifest Thy Presence within us,
That our hearts may sing the song of gladness,
That all our cares may be forgotten, and we may
In Thy Light find our way to peace and true happiness.
Thou art our only Sustainer—the One to be loved and worshipped—
Giver of all blessings, Embodiment of all blessedness!
Thou Compassionate Spirit, Unalterable and Unfailing,
Surround us with Thy protecting love
And keep us ever in peace!
Peace, peace, peace be unto us and to all living beings!

The most fitting sermon for Christmas is really the sermon of song. It is an occasion when the soul should sing with no ordinary voice, but with that pure gladness which finds its expression through lyrical beauty. How can we ever define it in words? When a person is joyous—especially with a joy that partakes of spiritual exuberance—the soul sings, and we must have understanding in our heart to comprehend that song.

The coming of Christ is very like the rising of a new dawn, and at the dawn there is always singing. You do not have to ask the birds to sing; the very first ray of light fills their hearts with music. In same way, those who are at all quickened spiritually sing. It is the most natural thing for man and for birds to sing at the coming of the dawn. It is only when we are not normal that we do not rise with a song. Therefore, in order that we may have a natural, joyous life, a ray of the divine Sun comes to set us free; for there can be no joy without freedom.

It is the Divine which brings redemption to the human; yet the Infinite, the Divine, the Spirit in abstract can never reach our heart. It has to manifest through some tender form. Christmas, to my mind, is significant in the tremendous emphasis it lays on the tenderness of love.

Let me speak just as it comes to me. In India, we have a way of looking to a Divine Mother, enduring, all-loving, all-sacred, and all-tender. Embodied Love alone can bring the Divine Spirit into incarnation; therefore, it is the mother-heart—the Divine Mother-heart—that brings to birth the Spirit of Christmas.

Christmas is set apart as a time for giving. Our hearts are made glad through God's gift to us, so naturally we desire to give in full measure in order to prove that we are worthy to receive His gift. In my land, when a baby is born, the parents, whether they be rich or poor, make offerings with the thought of bringing blessings on the child. Giving is really to make us more worthy to receive. Again and again we are asked to give our all—all we are and all we have—but we are so afraid. Let us turn to the Christ. How fully He gives, yet how unaltered He remains!

There are some things which never grow old. The spirit never grows old. This is expressed in a beautiful song in the Bhagavad-Gita: "The Self is never born, nor does It die, nor after once having been does It go into nonbeing. It is eternal; It is everlasting." That is what we find in the incarnate Spirit—unending joy, exuberance of youth, the tenderness of a child.

Here in Christendom among the great mystic teachers, there are men of meditation who carry the little child Jesus as their symbol. When we grow up, most of us find that no matter what faith we hold, we have to combat a hard, material world. Generally we reason with it and try with words to convince it of the beatitude of God. But God has a much better way which requires no language, no intellectual argument. It is the way of love. How does a little child express its power? By its gentle touch. At that most spontaneous, tender touch even criminals forget their evil instinct, and often are completely transformed. This transformation, to my mind, is the mission of the Christ-child in the world of men. When men become hardened, sophisticated, and materialistic, forgetting their innate higher instinct of gentleness, faith, hope and love, the only power that can ever break the crust of their self-imposed egotism is the touch of a gentle child. As we often see an irascible father led by the hand of a tender babe to a place of amusement, making him forget all his ailments of discontent and hardness of heart, thus the incarnate, divine Spirit manifests as a child, melting the hard, unfeeling world by its gentle appeal.

We read many wonderful stories about Christ as the adult, the preacher, the leader; but it is the baby Jesus who draws the heart of mankind. I am rather inclined to lay my emphasis there; not only now, because it is Christmas, but throughout the year—throughout life. For there is no one who can ever grow in wisdom and in blessedness without carrying that tender, blessed Child in the heart of his heart. Beauty, poetry, song, music, all are woven around the child. He redeems and revives; he brings freshness and makes us forget what is unpleasant in this world of life.

With the Hindus, the best and supreme expression of spiritual ardor is wound around the theme of Baby Krishna, and I think it is the same in Christendom with regard to the Christ. Everywhere men seem to feel a special joyousness when they deal with the child. If we want to grow in wisdom, in love, in real majesty of Spirit, let us never outgrow that feeling.

Picture the Babe, beautiful and tender, so divinely tender that there can be no shadow of anything else! Do you not know that it is the gentle strength which conquers the world? The power that man manifests through hate, bitterness, envy, anger, or ambition never endures; it passes away. But the tenderness of love remains in human life to revive and redeem, to refresh our soul, and give us new courage. Think how much a father and mother are willing to go through in the rearing of a little child. When a babe is born, when a new life comes, it means a new era. If there is grief and disappointment, they are forgotten; if there is poverty, we refuse to recognize it. So in this world, when the divine Child finds His access all impoverishment vanishes.

The Wise Men brought gifts to the Holy Child—the gifts of their souls—and it is the gift of our soul that we must bring before the altar of the Christ-child. There is only one gift, though it may be expressed through many avenues—the gift of love: love that knows no hate, love that knows no sting of anger or jealousy or fear, mother-love and Christ-love. Therefore the babe and the mother, the Mother and the Holy Child, these two remain inseparable in the consciousness of the spiritual world.

Let us absorb that spirit of tender mother-love, that we may never become hardened as we come in contact with the things of the world; may it ever remain in our heart! That Spirit of Christ—that Spirit of Divinity—may it be born in us anew, gladdening our soul, our heart, our mind; giving us hope, fresh courage, inspiration, and, above all, reminding us of our mission in life.

Christ came into the world as a messenger of God walking in glory on the path of life, but very much as a brother of man, a friend of man, and especially a friend of the lowly. We who doubt our divine birthright, we who are despondent, who cannot make any headway because we have lost the light—to us He comes to remind us of our spiritual heritage, to revive us, to restore our vision that we may find our way unto Him. From childhood up, at every step, He makes us realize how much the child He is, how dependent He is on the Divine Parent, how absolutely one with Him. Without His Father He could do nothing. As we are able to absorb that spirit, to live with that spirit, we shall find our own gladness and peace. Only then may we hope to make this world happier and more peaceful.

It is well for us to remember how utterly the true king is without the desire to rule, to have sway over men. Humility of spirit, gentleness of power, all-conquering love, these are the attributes of the divine Light, and we cannot honor, worship, or be inspired by that great example unless we make ourselves like unto it.

What a splendid tradition Christmas holds for humanity: remembering friends, forgetting enmities! And how wonderful it would be if we could carry it all with the living glow of love! Many still have the peculiar notion that God comes in glory; they have the old conception of the divine birth, the angels singing. The angels do sing, but not in the visionary way that we have imagined. The Angel of Love inspires every one to sing with joyousness when the consecrated, the majestic, form of Divine Beauty draws close to the heart of man. That is what we call the "Redeemer," coming not in pomp but with this inward power of faith, of love, of lowliness—such lowliness that men pass Him by. Let us not pass the Christ-Spirit by! Rather let us grow in qualities that we may pass no one by or become harsh or inflict wounds on any heart.

The Spirit of Christmas is really the spirit of rejoicing, when every heart strives to diminish the sadness of the world. Let us, as we go forth, carry that thought as a benediction to our fellowmen, that through God's grace we may increase their joyousness, and as we smile upon them, cause them to smile, and to partake of the peace of God and the joy of God—those two attributes of holy life.

TO KNOW, TO DO, TO LOVE

From the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna

Yoga (communion with the Lord) is of three kinds: 1. Gnana-yoga, 2. Karma-yoga, 3. Bhakti-yoga.

Gnana-yoga

This is communion with God by means of Gnana (Knowledge in its highest sense). The Gnani's object is to realize *Brahman, the Absolute.* He saith, "Not this; not this," and thus leaveth out of account one unreal thing after another, until he getteth to a point where all discrimination between the Real (i.e., God) and the unreal ceaseth, and the Absolute is realized in *Samadhi*—divine ecstasy.

Karma-yoga

This is communion with God by means of work. The doing of duties by householders—the doing them *without attachment,* to the end that God may be glorified—is Karma-yoga.

Again worship according to the Scriptures, silent repetition of the Name of God, and other acts of the kind are Karma-yoga, if done without attachment for the glorification of God.

Raja-yoga practised without attachment, is Karma-Yoga; it leadeth to communion through meditation and concentration.

The end of Karma-yoga is the same, viz., the realization of God, Impersonal or Personal, or both.

Bhakti-yoga

This is communion by means of love, devotion, and self-surrender. It is specially adapted to this present age. Pure work without attachment is exceedingly difficult in this age.

In the first place, there is hardly time in this age for doing the various works laid upon us by the Holy Books.

In the second place, thou mayest form a resolution to work unattached, without expectation of any reward or fear of any punishment in this world or in the next, but the chances are that, knowingly or unknowingly, thou wilt get attached to the fruit of thy works, unless indeed thou art already a perfect man.

The path of Absolute Knowledge, or communion by philosophy, is also exceedingly difficult in this age. The present term of human life is much too short for this purpose. Moreover, it is almost impossible for us to get rid of the conviction which clingeth to us that the *self is the same* as the body. Now what is the conclusion which the Gnani or Knower, must come to? It is this: "I am not the body, gross or subtle. I am one with the Universal Soul, the Being Absolute and Unconditioned. Not being the body, I am not subject to the necessities of the body—hunger, thirst, birth, death, disease, grief, pleasure, pain, etc."

One subject to the necessities of the body and calling himself a philosopher is like a person suffering from intense pain caused by a thorny plant. It scratcheth and teareth the hand and causeth it to bleed. But he nevertheless saith, "Why, my hand is not scratched or torn at all. It is all right."

Hence the path of communion by love, devotion, and self-surrender to God is the easiest of all paths. It bringeth *Karma* (work) to a minimum. It teacheth the necessity of prayer without ceasing. It is in this age the shortest cut leading to God.

The meaning of this is that discrimination between God, the Only Reality, and the unreal phenomenal universe, or the doing of works, is far more difficult in this age than Bhakti as a method or path leading to God. It is not meant that the *goal* is different.

The philosopher indeed wanteth to realize God Impersonal. What is meant is that such a person would in this age do better to follow the method of the Bhakti-yoga. Let him love, pray, surrender himself entirely to God. The Lord loveth His devotee and will vouchsafe unto him even the knowledge of the Absolute if he hungereth and thirsteth after it.

The philosopher will thus realize God, both Personal and Impersonal. *Only let him in this age follow the method of the Bhakta.*

Do but come to my Divine Mother and you will get not only Bhakti but also Gnana, not only Gnana but also Bhakti—not only see Her in *Samadhi* manifesting Herself in Forms Divine, but also realize Her as the Absolute, in which all self in the devotee is effaced by my Mother, and there is no manifestation of Divine Forms.

Pandit: Please, Sir, how far didst thou go abroad on pilgrimage?

Sri Ramakrishna (smiling): Well, I went to some places. Hazra went farther and higher up—to Hrisikesha on the Himalayas. I did not go so far or so high up. The vulture and the kite do indeed soar very high, but all the while their looks are fixed on the charnel-pits where the carcasses of dead animals are thrown.

The charnel-pit is the world—which is another name for lust and gold.

The vulture and the kite are they that talk big and try to justify themselves by the doing of works enjoined by the Holy Books. But all the while their mind is attached to the things of the world—riches, honors, and sensual pleasures.

What is the good of visiting places of pilgrimage once thou art able to cultivate Bhakti?

When, on my pilgrimage, I visited Benares, I was surprised to see that the grass there was the same grass as here, and that there were the same tamarind leaves.

Love of God is the one thing needful.

Try to live one day without speaking a critical word or thinking a critical thought of any human being, and see if the habit criticism has not been popular with you. Test it as you listen to the conversation of others, but do not criticize them if you find it popular with them. We need to be cleansed and purged of it wholly, completely and forever. —*Anonymous*

May I strip off my evil so that the bird may bear it to heaven! May the river bear it along; the waters of the river, may they cleanse me as they flow! Make me to shine like a mask of gold. As a goblet of glass may I be precious in Thy sight. —*Babylonian Psalm*

Suffer no anxiety; for he who is a sufferer of anxiety becometh contracted in body and soul, and regardless of enjoyment in the world and spirit. —*Persian Scripture*

HYMN OF THE ROBE OF GLORY

By Bardaisan

(From "Fragments of a Faith Forgotten," a volume of Gnostic writings of the first and second centuries A. D., collected by G. R. S. Mead.)

[Bardaisan, the author of the following hymn, was born July 11th, A.D. 155, in the land of Syria beside the leaping waters of the Daisan River, at the city of Edessa, the ancient Ur of the Chaldees; the city of which the Syrian-Turkish generals said, after taking it by assault, "It is so beautiful we shall not destroy it"; the city of the great kings of old, of Nimrod and of Abraham; the city that is yielding up today such treasures of past culture as to shame our modern boast.

According to some legends, Bardaisan was the son of a river god, his name Bar (son) Daisan (leaping) seeming to suggest this. The Syrians, however, assure us that the river deity was merely his foster mother. We do know that he was of an ancient noble family and had as his favorite playmate Abgar Bar-Manu, a prince of the realm. As for his achievements, the fact that the last of the Gnostics were known as Bardaisans signifies the extent of his spiritual influence. He wrote many books in the Syrian language and likewise in the Greek, but even the titles of these are now lost. His most famous work was a collection of one hundred and fifty hymns and psalms, on the model of the psalm collection of the Second Temple as still preserved in the old Covenant documents. He was the first to write Christian hymns, also the first to adapt the Syrian tongue to metrical form and set the words to music. He died in A.D. 233, having lived seventy-eight years, and was the father of one son, Harmonius.

The Gnostics were the members of a system of thought which flourished for five or six centuries after the crucifixion. Their central theme seems to have been the innate perfection of man, a perfection that can be realized at any moment of time and is not dependent upon the ripening of knowledge. They say: "There is something which you can instantly know as well at one stage of the cosmos as another, which would mean to you everything that would constitute perfection of life." Their teachings sought to put man in touch with that "something." They saw the manifested universe as the result of a series of emanations—effluxes from the Godhead forming the multiplicity of created beings.

The present translation of the "Hymn of the Robe of Glory" is attributed to Prof. Bevan, of whom nothing authentic can be ascertained.]

When I was a little child,
  And dwelling in my kingdom, in my Father's house,
And in the wealth and the glories
  Of my nurturers had my pleasure,
From the East, our home,
  My parents, having equipped me, sent me forth.
And of the wealth of our treasury
  They had tied up for me a load.
Large it was, yet light,
  So that I might bear it unaided . . .
Gold of . . .
  And silver of Gazzak the great,
And rubies of India,
  And [agate] from the land of [Kushan],
And they girded me with adamant
  Which can crush iron.
And they took off from me the bright robe,

Which in their love they had wrought for me,
And my purple toga,
Which was measured [and] woven to my stature.
And they made compact with me,
And wrote it in my heart that it should not be forgotten:
"If thou goest down into Egypt,
And bringest the one pearl,
Which is in the midst of the sea
Hard by the loud-breathing serpent,
[Then] shalt thou put on thy bright robe
And thy toga, which is laid over it,
And with thy Brother, our next in rank,
Thou shalt be heir in our kingdom."

I quitted the East [and] went down
There being with me two messengers
For the way was dangerous and difficult,
And I was young to tread it.
I passed the borders of Maishan,
The meeting place of the merchants of the East,
And I reached the land of Babel,
And I entered the walls of . . .
I went down into Egypt,
And my companions parted from me.
I betook me straight to the serpent,
Hard by his dwelling I abode,
[Waiting] till he could slumber and sleep,
And I could take my pearl from him.
And when I was single and alone,
A stranger to those with whom I dwelt,
One of my race, a freeborn man,
From among the Easterns, I beheld there—
A youth fair and well-favoured

And he came and attached himself to me.
  And I made him my intimate,
A comrade with whom I shared my merchandise,
  I warned him against the Egyptians
And against consorting with the unclean;
  And I put on a garb like theirs,
Lest they should [insult] me because I had come from afar,
  To take away the pearl,
And [lest] they should arouse the serpent against me.
  But in some way or other
They perceived that I was not their countryman;
  So they dealt with me treacherously.
Moreover they gave me their food to eat.
  I forgot that I was a son of kings,
And I served their king;
  And I forgot the pearl,
For which my parents had sent me,
  And by reason of the burden of their . . .
I lay in a deep sleep
  But all those things that befell me,
My parents perceived and were grieved for me;
  And a proclamation was made in our kingdom,
That all should speed to our gate,
  King and princes of Parthia
And all the nobles of the East.
  So they wove a plan on my behalf
That I might not be left in Egypt,
  And they wrote to me a letter,
And every noble signed his name thereto:
  "From thy Father, the King of kings,
And thy Mother, the Mistress of the East,
  And from thy Brother, our next in rank,
To thee our son, who art in Egypt, greeting!

Up and arise from thy sleep,
And listen to the words of our letter!
Call to mind that thou art a son of kings!
See the slavery—whom thou servest!
Remember the pearl
For which thou didst speed to Egypt!
Think of thy bright robe,
And remember thy glorious toga,
Which thou shalt put on as thine adornment,
When thy name hath been read out in the list of the valiant.
And with thy Brother, our [next in rank],
Thou shalt be [king] in our kingdom."
And my letter [was] a letter
Which the King sealed with his right hand,
[To keep it] from the wicked ones, the children of Babel,
And from the savage demons of . . .
It flew in the likeness of an eagle,
The king of all birds;
It flew and alighted beside me,
And became all speech.
At its voice and the sound of its rustling,
I started and arose from my sleep.
I took it up and kissed it,
And loosed its [seal, and] read;
And according to what was traced on my heart
Were the words of my letter written,
I remembered that I was a son of kings,
And my free soul longed for its natural state.
I remembered the pearl,
For which I had been sent to Egypt,
And I began to charm him,
The terrible loud-breathing serpent.
I hushed him to sleep and lulled him to slumber;

For my Father's name I named over him,
  And the name of our next in rank,
And of my Mother, the Queen of the East;
  And I snatched away the pearl,
And turned to go back to my Father's house,
  And their filthy and unclean garb
I stripped off, and left it in their country
  And I took my way straight to come
To the light of our home, the East.
  And my letter, my awakener,
I found before me on the road,
  And as with its voice it had awakened me
[So] too with its light it was leading me.

. . . .

  Shone before me with its form,
And with its voice and its guidance,
  It also encouraged me to speed,

. . . .

And with [his] love was drawing me on,
  I went forth, passed by . . .
I left Babel on my left hand
  And reached Maishan the great,
The haven of merchants,
  That sitteth on the shore of the sea.

. . . .

  And my bright robe, which I had stripped off,
And the toga wherein it was wrapped,
  From the heights of [Hyrcania]
My parents sent thither,
  By the hand of their treasurers,
Who in their faithfulness could be trusted therewith.
  And because I remembered not its fashion . . .
For in my childhood I had left it in my Father's house—

On a sudden I faced it,
The garment seemed to me like a mirror of myself.
I saw it all in my whole self,
Moreover I faced my whole self in [facing] it.
For we were two in distinction
And yet again one in one likeness,
And the treasurers also,
Who brought it to me,
I saw in like manner,
That they were twain [yet] one likeness
For one kingly sign was graven on them,
[Of His hands that restored to me]
My treasure and my wealth by means of them.
My bright embroidered robe,
Which . . . with glorious colours;
With gold and with beryls,
And rubies and [agates]
And sardonyxes varied in colour,
It also was made ready in its home [on high]
And with stones of adamant
All its seams were fastened;
And the image of the King of kings was depicted in full all over it,
And like the sapphire stone also were its manifold hues,
Again I saw that all over it
The motions of knowledge were stirring
And as if to speak
I saw it also making itself ready.
I heard the sound of its tones,
Which it uttered to those [who brought it down]
Saying, "I . . .
Whom they reared for [him] in the presence of my fathers."

And I also perceived in myself
  That my stature was growing according to his labours.
And in its kingly motions
  It was spreading itself out towards me,
And in the hands of its givers
  It hastened that I might take it.
And me too my love urged on
  That I should run to meet it and receive it;
And I stretched forth and received it,
  With the beauty of its colours I adorned myself
And my toga of brilliant colours
  I cast around me, in its whole breadth.
I clothed myself therewith, and ascended
  To the gate of salutation and homage,
I bowed my head, and did homage
  To the Majesty of my Father who had sent it to me,
For I had done his commandments,
  And he too had done what he promised,
And at the gate of his princes
  I mingled with his nobles;
For he rejoiced in me and received me,
  And I was with him in his kingdom,
And with the voice . . .
  All his servants glorify him.
And he promised that also to the gate
  Of the King of kings I should speed with him,
And bringing my gift and my pearl
  I should appear with him before our King.

THE ROYAL WAY

From the Writings of Pere Caussade

What avail the most sublime intelligence and divine revelations if we love not the will of God? The science of a soul faithful to her obligations, peacefully submissive to the secret inspirations of grace, humble and gentle with all, is worth more than the profound wisdom which penetrates mysteries. If we would but learn to see the will of God in the pride and cruelty of creatures, we would always meet them with gentleness and respect. Whatever the consequences of their disorders, they can never mar the divine order. We must only see in creatures the will of God whose instruments they are, and whose grace they communicate to us when we receive them with meekness and humility. We have not to concern ourselves for their course, but keep steadily on in our own, and thus with gentle firmness we will triumph over all obstacles, were they as firmly rooted as cedars and irresistible as rocks.

O Love! will men never see that thou meetest them at every step while they seek thee hither and thither where thou art not? When in the open country what folly not to breathe its pure air, to pause and study my steps when the path is smooth before me; to thirst when the flood encompasses me; to hunger for God when I may find Him, relish Him, and receive His will through all things!

Seek you, dear souls, the secret of union with God? There is none other than to avail yourselves of all that He sends you. All things may further this union; all things perfect it, save sin and that which is contrary to your duty. You have to accept what He sends and let it do its work in you. Everything is a banner to guide you, a stay to uphold you, an easy and safe vehicle to bear you on. Everything is in the hand of God. Everything is earth, air, water to the soul. God's action is more universally present than the elements. His grace penetrates you through all your senses, provided that you use them according to His order; for you must guard and close them to all that is not His will. There is not an atom which, entering your frame, may not cause this divine action to penetrate the very marrow of your bones. It is the source and origin of all things. The vital fluid which flows through your veins moves only by the order of the divine will; all the variations of your system—strength or weakness, languor or vigor, life or death—are but the instruments with which the divine action affects your sanctification. Under its influence all physical conditions become operations of grace. All your thoughts, all your emotions, whatever their apparent source, proceed from this invisible Hand. No created mind or heart can teach you what this divine action will do in you; you will learn it by successive experience.

Your life unceasingly flows into this incomprehensible abyss where we have but to love God and accept as best that which the present moment brings, with perfect confidence in this divine action which of itself can only work you good.

Yes, my Beloved, all souls might attain supernatural, admirable, inconceivably sublime states if they would but submit themselves to Thy divine action. All could reach it since it is offered to all. You have but to open your heart and it will enter of itself; for there is no soul that does not possess in Thee, my God, its infinitely perfect model; no soul in which Thy divine action labors not unceasingly to render it like unto Thy Image. If they were faithful, they would all live and speak divinely; the divine action would signalize each one of them through the most ordinary things.

How, O my God, can I cause Thy creature to relish what I advance? Must I, possessing a treasure capable of enriching all, see souls perish in their poverty? Must I see them die like desert plants, when I point out to them the source of living waters?

Come, simple souls, who have no feeling of devotion whatsoever, no talent, not even the first elements of instruction. You who understand nothing of spiritual terms, who are filled with admiration and astonishment by the eloquence of the learned, come and I will teach you the secret of excelling these brilliant intellects, and I will make perfection so attainable that you will find it within you, about you, around you at every step. I will unite you to God, and He will hold you by the hand from the moment that you begin to practise what I tell you. Come, not to learn the chart of this spiritual country, but to possess it, and to walk at ease therein without fear of going astray. Come, not to study the theory of divine grace, nor to learn what it has effected in all ages and is still effecting, but to be simply the subject of its operations. You have no need to learn and ingenuously repeat the words addressed to others: divine grace shall utter to you alone all that you require.

Yes, adorable, eternal Love! Love eternally fruitful and always marvelous! Will of my God, Thou art my book, my doctrine, my science; in Thee are my thoughts, my words, my deeds, my crosses. Not by consulting Thy other works can I become what Thou wouldst make me, but only by receiving Thee through all things in that one royal way of self-abandonment to Thy will—that ancient way, that way of my Fathers. I will think, speak, and be enlightened like them. Following in this way, I will imitate them, quote them, copy them in all things.

HOLY NATIVITIES

I.

JESUS THE CHRIST

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.

And it came to pass, that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name and his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. . . .

And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. . . .

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. . . . And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. . . .

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt. . . .

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. . . .

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judæa in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee.

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene. . . .

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

—*From St. Matthew and St. Luke.*

(Part II will appear in the January number.)

GLADNESS OF HEART

By Sister Devamata

Glad-heartedness is not a quality we acquire; it is the spontaneous outgrowth of being. It does not depend on temperament or mood. It is not the property of a chosen few. It is an inherent attribute of all nature—cosmic and individual. "Out of bliss the worlds are born; in bliss they live, and to bliss they go!" the Vedic Scriptures declare. The universe may seem to weep, but it smiles through its tears and builds rainbows out of storm. Man, today forgetting his joy in his grief, tomorrow is trying to remember his sorrow. The child laughs with wet eyes, and I have seen an angry crowd turned back by a happy jest.

This cosmic gladness inheres in the heart of every human being as fragrance in a flower or flavor in a fruit. It is continuous and habitual—like a lamp placed in a windless spot, it does not flicker. It cannot be fitful or changing, for it is not a reflex of some other feeling or condition. Steadiness and unbroken continuity are its fundamental attributes. It possesses the same steadfastness as the sun, which never ceases to shine. Clouds may try to obscure the sun, but it turns them into glowing fire. Mists rise to veil it, and it transforms them into opalescent radiance. It may be shadowed for a moment, but it can never be extinguished. It is a light which shines by its own nature, —self-luminous.

Such is the unfailing flame of joy burning in the heart of man. It lies deeper than happiness. It is more vital than exuberance or cheerfulness—they are but the glinting ripples on its surface. It reaches beyond elation. Elation is an explosive state that leads too often to disaster. At best it is but the cheap counterfeit of joy. Cosmic joy is profound, serene, inward, and unalterable. It is the "joy within" of which the Bhagavad-Gita speaks. When man awakens to its presence, despair, despondency, all sense of injury vanish. This inner fire of gladness may be covered, hidden for a short time, but it cannot be smothered. Soon it begins to glow through its covering and bursts once more into flame. Men outgrow their griefs; they outgrow their pleasures; they never outgrow the joy within. If they do not feel it always, it is because they have blanketed it with the outer. They need to uncover it.

At present the majority of men know the inner light of gladness only through its reflection on outer surfaces. When it glows and glimmers on a bright surface, they call it happiness; when it falls on a dull, unresponding medium, they call it pain. They do not realize that both have their origin in the same joy within. But given such variation in the pictures, how can we hope to know that origin? Exact knowledge through study of a reflection is never possible. There are too many angles of incidence and refraction to take account of. The fluctuations in the data are too many to permit the formulating of an exact equation. Man must turn inward and seek the thing in itself, as Kant puts it.

He must detach himself from all these bewildering, delusive outward objects which reflect but do not reveal. The light which discloses their presence comes from within himself, not from them. He lends them their character and value. The proof is that each individual interprets them in different terms, according to the angle of the reflection he catches. True glad-heartedness cannot rest on anything so variable, for the corner stone of all joy is certitude—the certainty of continuance. As soon as the element of uncertainty enters, our joy falls to a lower level and breaks into two—joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain.

Man must detach himself also from his own changing moods and tempers. These are most deluding media of reflection. They seem more real because they are more inward, more a part of us. He must learn to meet with calm detachment praise and blame, rebuke and insult. Why should he feel resentment or foster a sense of grievance? The serene light of joy still burns within.

These few lines, without literary value have served as a helpful corrective for sensitiveness, so I give them here:

I am nor greater nor less by judgment of men,
Neither better nor worse by human decree.
Mightier hands hold the balancing scales
That determine my lack or my merit.
I am what I am
By Divine weight and measure.

Why should we base the happiness even of an hour on so flimsy a thing as praise, or let it be destroyed by so casual a thing as blame? Neither can change what we are, or alter our relation to the world and to the Great Power which stands behind it. An eight-foot pole does not lengthen or shorten because the passer-by says it is ten or six feet high. So do we remain unchanged by word or act of another. All the worlds cannot quench our "joy within" when we have once found it.

All true Joy is in the Unbounded, the Upanishads proclaim. "The Infinite is bliss. There is no bliss in the finite. In the Infinite alone is bliss." That joy which rests on the Unbounded is itself unbounded. It is the eternal flame rising from the fire struck by the meeting of God's Divinity with our humanity. It is a purging, purifying flame which burns away all grief and doubt and fear and leaves the heart aglow with Divine gladness.

A CHRISTMAS LETTER

(Although we believe the following letter to be genuine, we cannot vouch for its authenticity. We feel, however, that the facts of date and authorship are not so important as the spirit conveyed—the living charm—which is not dependent on time, place, or circumstance.)

Christmas Eve,
Anno Domini, 1513,
Pontassieve.

To the Most Illustrious
The Contessina Allagia
dela Aldobrandeschi,
On the Via de Martelli,

Firenze.

Most Noble Contessina:

I salute you. Believe me your most devoted servant.

The rascal who carries this letter, if he devour them not on the way, will crave your acceptance of some of the fruits of our garden. Would that the peace of Heaven might reach you through such things of earth!

Contessina, forgive an old man's babble. But I am your friend, and my love for you goes deep. There is nothing I can give you which you have not got; but there is much, very much, that, while I cannot give it, you can take. No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today. Take heaven! No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant. Take peace!

The gloom of the world is but a shadow. Behind it, yet within our reach, is joy. There is radiance and glory in the darkness, could we but see; and to see, we have only to look. Contessina, I beseech you to look.

Life is so generous a giver, but we, judging its gifts by their covering, cast them away as ugly or heavy or hard. Remove the covering, and you will find beneath it a living splendor, woven of love, by wisdom, with power. Welcome it, grasp it, and you touch the Angel's hand that brings it to you. Everything we call a trial, a sorrow, or a duty: believe me, that Angel's hand is there; the gift is there, and the wonder of an overshadowing Presence. Our joys, too: be not content with them as joys. They, too, conceal diviner gifts.

Life is so full of meaning and of purpose, so full of beauty—beneath its covering—that you will find earth but cloaks your heaven. Courage, then, to claim it: that is all! But courage you have; and the knowledge that we are pilgrims together, wending through unknown country, home.

And so, at this Christmas time, I greet you: not quite as the world sends greetings, but with profound esteem, and with the prayer that for you, now and forever, the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

I have the honor to be your servant, though the least worthy of them. —*Fra Giovanni.*

Happy day when—all appetites controlled, all passions subdued, all matter subjugated—mind, all-conquering mind, shall live and move, the monarch of the world.

—*Abraham Lincoln.*

A CAROL

By G. K. Chesterton

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.

Last night I dreamed that I was the same boy that I had been before my mother died. She sat in a room in a garden house on the bank of the Ganges. I carelessly passed by without paying attention to her, when all of a sudden it flashed through my mind with an unutterable longing that my mother was there. At once I stopped and went back to her and bowing low touched her feet with my head. She held my hand, and looked into my face and said: "You have come!"

In this great world we carelessly pass by the room where Mother sits. Her storeroom is open when we want our food, our bed is ready when we must sleep. Only that touch and that voice are wanting. We are moving about, but never coming close to the personal presence, to be held by the hand and greeted: "You have come!"

Rabindranath Tagore.

THE MEASURE OF LIFE

From the Epistles of Seneca

(Great Roman moralist and Stoic philosopher, born at Cordova about 4 B. C. He was a tutor to Nero and brother of Gallio, that Governor of Achaia who, when St. Paul was accused, "cared for none of these things." He may or may not have been indirectly influenced by young Christianity, but standing, as he did, on the threshold of the new era, he was claimed by the early church, and is still known in Spain as St. Seneca. He died in A. D. 69, condemned to death by Nero who falsely accused him of conspiracy.)

Pray let us see to it, my dear Lucilius, that our lives, like jewels of great price, be noteworthy not because of their width, but because of their weight. Let us measure them by their performance, not their duration.

Would you know wherein lies the difference between this hardy man who, despising Fortune, has served through every campaign of life and has attained to life's Supreme Good, and that other over whose head merely many years have passed? The former exists even after his death; the latter has died even before he is dead.

We should, therefore, number in the company of the blest that man who has invested well the portion of time, however little, that has been allotted him. He has not only lived, but flourished. Sometimes he enjoyed fair skies; sometimes it was only through clouds that there flashed to him the radiance of the mighty star.

Why do you ask: How long did he live? He still lives!

At one bound he has passed over into posterity and has consigned himself to the guardianship of memory.

Just as one of small stature can be a perfect man, so a life of small compass can be a perfect life. This is the only thing you have the right to require of me, that I shall cease to measure out an inglorious age as it were in darkness, and devote myself to living instead of being carried along past life.

REPORT

The Thanksgiving Service in Boston was a very special event. Swami Paramananda after a lapse of over two weeks from public activities conducted the Service. The Chapel was crowded with an eager and expectant congregation. The Swami in his usual manner of simplicity and directness spoke on the Significance of Thanksgiving, telling his congregation that it was not merely of American origin but that all over the world this custom was observed in one way or another. "The gifts of life with their richness and blessings taste sweeter when they are consecrated through prayers and thoughts of the Giver. It is not a feast to be observed only once a year but if we can learn the art of remembering and offering our thanks daily and habitually to that One from Whom all our blessings flow it will make our life much more productive for ourselves and for the world in general. It is true that the Infinite has no need of our prayers, homage and altar offerings, but we have great need of constantly remembering and reminding ourselves that all we are and all we have are His. This is a necessity for every individual for his safeguard and balance of perception and humility, without which the presence of the Deity is impossible." The spirit of true thanksgiving was felt pulsating in the Chapel of the Vedanta Centre that morning.

One of the unusual incidents that took place at the Vedanta Centre of Boston was the visit of the Friendly Tours. This is an interesting group of men and women who make a pilgrimage and visit the different existing religious centres of Boston. On the 30th of November the Vedanta Centre was their meeting-place. Srimati Charushila Devi spoke to them at length on the fundamental principles of Vedanta and the ideals of India in general, but at the conclusion Swami Paramananda himself spoke to his guests for a few minutes.

At Ananda-Ashrama, California, the usual routine of Services and Classes has been maintained during the Swami's absence. There has been but one special event—Thanksgiving. Although this is pre-eminently a home festival, on that evening, there was a happy gathering of friends for the Hindu dinner, cooked by Srimati Gayatri Devi. She also conducted a special Service in the Temple, instead of the regular Thursday night Class.

Eager and devoted hands of the Ananda-Ashrama are deeply engrossed in making the new home of the Vedanta Centre in the heart of Los Angeles ready for its opening. The opening date which was postponed because of the Swami's absence from California has been definitely decided on for January 14th, Tuesday evening, at eight o'clock. All the friends of the work are cordially invited to attend.

JUST OUT

MY CREED, a new book of poems by Swami Paramananda, has just come out of the press. A review will appear in next month's issue.

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